BELEN

HUB CITY OF NEW MEXICO

"Heart of the Rio Grande Valley"

BHHC-4-1-24-1

BELEN

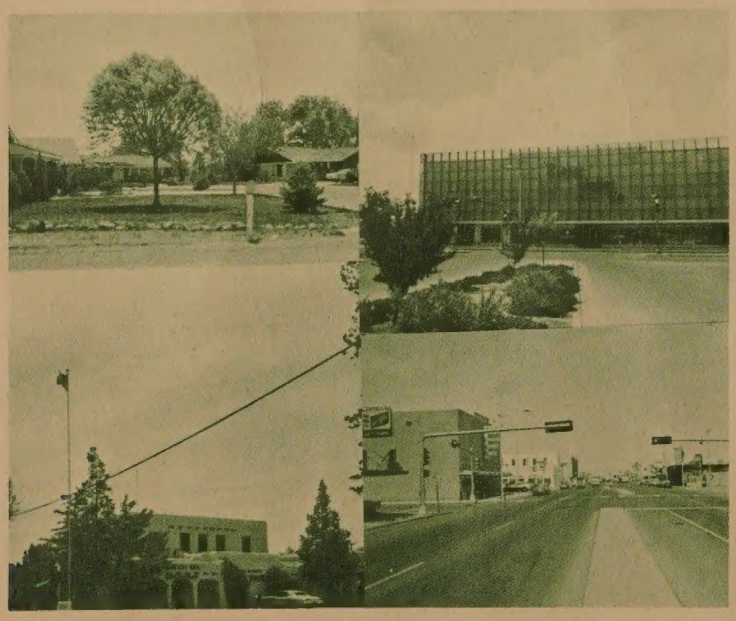
Hub City of New Mexico was founded in 1741 by two Spaniards who petitioned for and received a large grant of land known as Nuestra Senora de Belen (Our Lady of Belen). Belen is the Spanish word for Bethlehem. The ruins of a church known as the "Pueblo de Altos Ruins" six miles south of Belen, dates back to 1608, 12 years before Jamestown.

The first Anglo people began settling in Belen in the 1870's. They were mostly of German descent and were the forefathers of many of the present businessmen in Belen.

In 1880, the Santa Fe Railroad opened a new system through Belen. Seventeen years later they opened the east-west line, making Belen its "Hub City" and one of the most important railroad centers in New Mexico.

Belen is also the Hub City because of its central location in the State. It is in the heart of the Middle Rio Grande Valley which encompasses nearly 125,000 irrigable acres—a third of this acreage is within a 10 mile radius of the Hub City.

The population of the greater Belen area is more than 9,000, and serves a trade territory of more than 20,000 people. Its economic stability is based on a diversification of industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises as well as its close proximity to Albuquerque.



TRANSPORTATION

The Santa Fe Railroad maintains one of its largest freight classification yards employing in excess of 400 people. It has lines extending north, east, south, and west with 30 to 35 freight trains per day.

Four common carriers operate through Belen providing daily service in all directions.

One major bus line operates through Belen providing 3 daily schedules to Albuquerque north, and 3 daily schedules to the south and El Paso.

Interstate Highway 25 running from Canada to Mexico merges with Interstate 40 at Albuquerque, and other major state highways to provide excellent highway transportation in all directions.

Belen is located on Interstate 25 just 30 miles south of Albuquerque where air service is available on four scheduled airlines; TWA, Continental, Frontier, and Texas International. Private air facilities are available in Belen proper, with paved runways, landing lights, and tie-down facilities.

LABOR

Belen's proximity and accessibility to Albuquerque enables it to draw from the largest labor pool in New Mexico and benefit from the modern and complete training facilities.

Among the beneficial characteristics of the local labor supply are trainability, manual dexterity, and stability. One third of those responding to a recent labor survey had received some type of vocational or technical training and nearly 90 percent were high school graduates. Recent industrial developments in the area have proven the labor force to be highly trainable and willing to work.

With the establishment of an area for retired people, Belen offers a broad cross section of employable people in all age groups.

INDUSTRIAL SITES AND UTILITIES

Belen offers numerous possibilities for industrial locations, both private and municipally owned. All of the sites are located on, or are accessible to, the excellent transportation facilities in the area. The City of Belen Industrial Revenue Bond Capacity is available to aid in development of industrial sites.

Electric power and gas are provided by Public Service Company of New Mexico and Southern Union Gas Company. Both are investor owned utilities whose planning for the future insures adequate supply and reliability.

Water is provided by the City in adequate supply to meet the needs of the people and industry. The average daily usage is approximately 1 million gallons with a capacity of approximately 3 million gallons. Water outside the city limits is from shallow wells.

AGRICULTURE

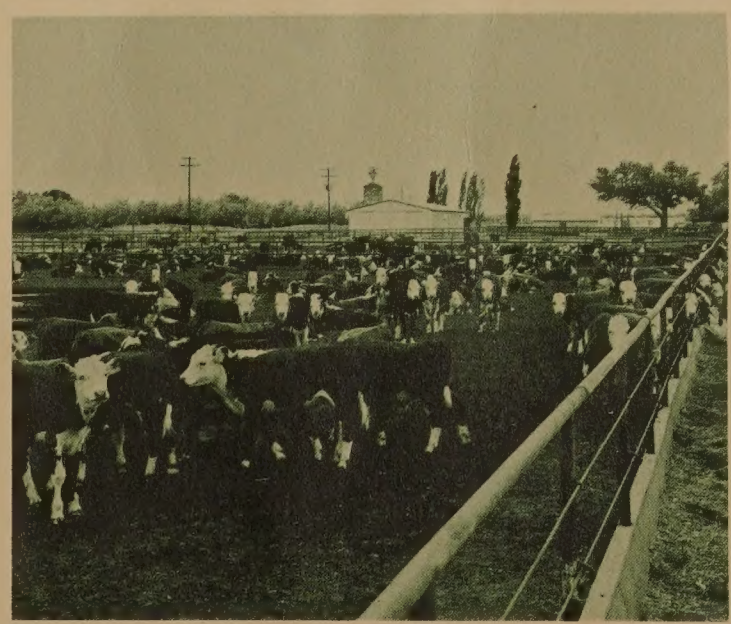
Geographically the entire Belen area is well located for the production and marketing of vegetables, alfalfa, hay, sorghum grains and fruits.

With more than 50 dairies operating within a 25 mile radius, dairying has become the fastest growing industry in the area.

Truck gardening in general, and highly productive lettuce farms and tomato greenhouses play an important role in the economy of the area. The crops are crated, precooled, and shipped to such metropolitan centers as Chicago, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia.

A cactus research farm, with a catalog of over 700 varieties of cactus plants shipped to markets all over the world, offers a most unusual industrial enterprise to the Hub City.

The New Mexico State University agricultural research station near Belen, provides employment and agricultural expertise to the area.



BELEN

HUB CITY OF NEW MEXICO

LIVABILITY

Schools:

The Belen School System is fully accredited and consists of 9 elementary, 1 junior high, and 1 high school. The University of New Mexico, the University of Albuquerque, and the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology are all located within 40 miles of Belen. The University of Albuquerque operates the Rio Grande Educational Center in Belen, offering accredited courses in the liberal arts field.

Technical Vocational Training schools are available in Albuquerque for the training of specific skills to meet the needs of industry.

Churches:

Belen churches provide not only "houses of worship" but their buildings and equipment fill an integral part of community life.

Climate:

Belen, in one of the nation's most ideal climate belts, is noted for its low humidity, and 350 days of warm sunshine. With an elevation of4800 feet, Belen offers four seasons of pleasant year-round living.

Being the geographic center of New Mexico, Belen is easily accessible to all the recreation activities and scenic beauty that gives New Mexico its reputation as the Land of Enchantment.

Community Service:

Belen has a full complement of retail establishments, hotels, restaurants, theaters, and banks. Additionally, it has a modern 30 bed hospital to meet local medical needs. Belen boasts a semi-weekly newspaper, a 250 watt radio station, and excellent television and radio reception from Albuquerque. Almost all civic and fraternal organizations are represented and active in Belen.

OPPORTUNITY PLUS

Truly New Mexico is the Land of Enchantment, and Belen is the Hub from which you can venture out to discover an ever-changing panorama of vast mesa and towering mountains, of primeval forest and rugged desert, of arid plain and fertile valley. Belen is the Hub of unlimited opportunity in the heart of sun-drenched New Mexico. The city of Belen with its strategic transportation facilities will match strides with New Mexico's progress, expansion and development. Here is great industrial potential with water, power, labor, and climate. The horizons of economic development and expansion are broad in this vast land. Come to New Mexico's Hub City where you will find and share with others the profit and fascination of the Land of Enchantment.

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION
WRITE OR CALL

BELEN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
P. O. BOX 818 BELEN, NEW MEXICO 87002

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August 8, 1990

Valencia County
News-Bulletin

1740-1990

Happy Birthday, Belen!

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Jan. 14, 1998

Please do not remove from Museum

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From settlement to city: Belen grows in 250 years

by TIBO J. CHAVEZ

The religious significance of the City of Belen starts with its name, Belen. What does Belen mean?

Belen means Bethlehem, the place of the birth of Jesus Christ in the Holy Land. This tells you something about the Christian faith of the founders of the town of Belen.

I remember as a youth going to Catholic Church with my parents and singing with the congregation in Spanish the following *alabado*, which means church hymn.

"Vamos todos a Belen,
con amor y gozo.
Adoremos al Señor,
Nuestro Redentor."

This *alabado* freely translates as follows:
"Let us all go to Belen,
on this Christmas morn.
Let us all rejoice and sing,
Christ the Savior is born."

BELEN'S FOUNDERS

The original founders of Belen in 1740, or 36 years before the American Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, were Captain Diego de Torres and 32 other families. (From El Rio Abajo, history by Chavez and Espinosa).

Belen was situated in the Rio Grande valley, 30 miles south of Albuquerque, which was founded in 1706.

The Tomé and Los Chavez Spanish Land Grants were founded in 1739, or one year before the founding of Belen.

The Belen Land Grant consisted of approximately 200,000 acres stretching from the Manzano mountains on the east boundary to the Rio Puerco on the west.

It was bounded on the north by the Los Chavez and Tomé land grants and on the south the land grant was bounded by the present community of Bernardo approximately 20 miles south of Belen.

AGRICULTURE, INDIANS AND CONSTRUCTION

The Belen colonists, as we can imagine, brought with them European seeds for their gardens and agricultural fields and to sustain themselves and their families.

They brought with them many seeds, such as wheat, oats, corn, beans, chili, squash, shrubs, fruit trees of all kinds, apples, apricots, peaches, etc.

Also, livestock including cattle, horses, sheep, goats, chickens, etc.

Hornos for the baking of bread were brought in by the first settlers in this area and, of course, we know that the horno was brought into Spain by the Moors many years ago when they occupied Spain for 800 years.

The first construction of the Spanish hornos occurred here in New Mexico, particularly in Northern New Mexico, where they were discovered a few years ago by some of the anthropologists and archaeologists who were doing diggings in the area.

Also introduced in the New Spain, or into New Mexico, was the yeast used to leaven or make bread rise.

The Native Americans had agriculture before the arrival of the newcomers. Yet, it was limited to the planting of corn, beans, squash and melons.

Soon, the Indians adopted the new farming method and the domestic seeds of the Spanish as well as the fruit trees and it drew them immediately into a new culture and a new way of life.

Both the Indians and Spanish gained from this interchange because the Spanish borrowed many things from the Indians, and the Pueblo Indians.

What resulted was a very strong alliance with the Spanish in the valley.

The members of the first colony of Belen soon constructed homes using adobes for the walls of the home.

For roof support, they used *vigas*, or logs, cut from the cottonwood trees, or even better from pine logs which were cut in the Manzano Mountains and hauled over a distance of approximately 20 miles to the valley using old carts, or *carretas*, which were also homemade.

A church was soon established in the center of the plaza known as Old Town today.

The colony survived because of the fertile soil in the rich agricultural valley of the Rio Grande and abundant pastures of different grasses for the livestock.

Soon after the colony was established the marauding wild tribes, consisting of the Apaches and Comanches, started raiding the new colonies, raiding their livestock, taking with them food produced by the farmers and

(Continued on Page 4)

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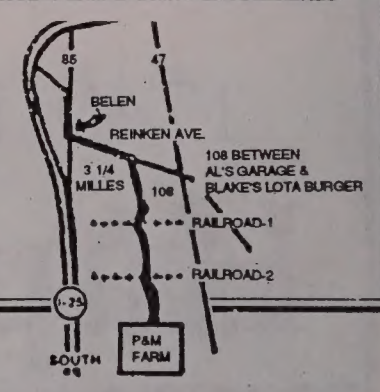

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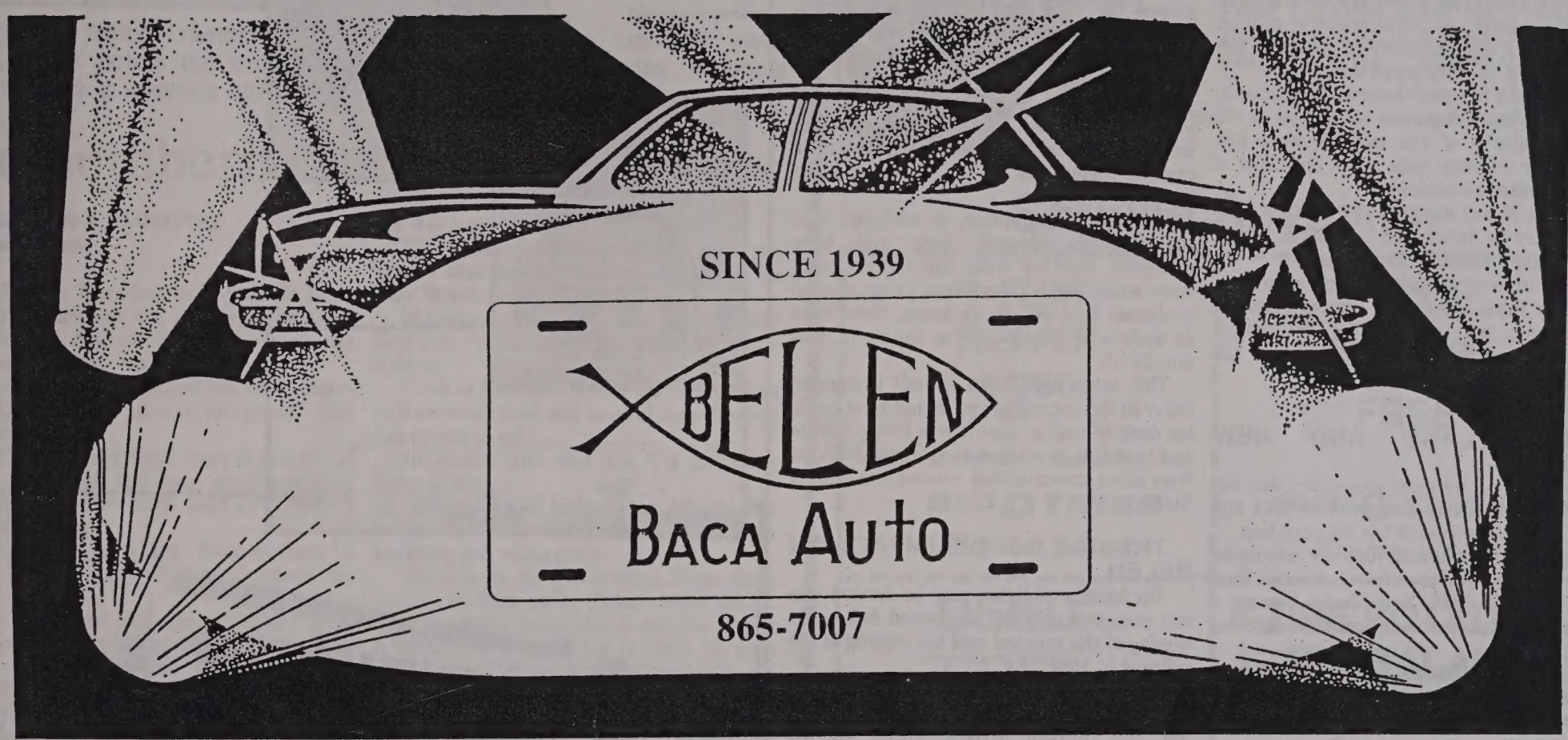
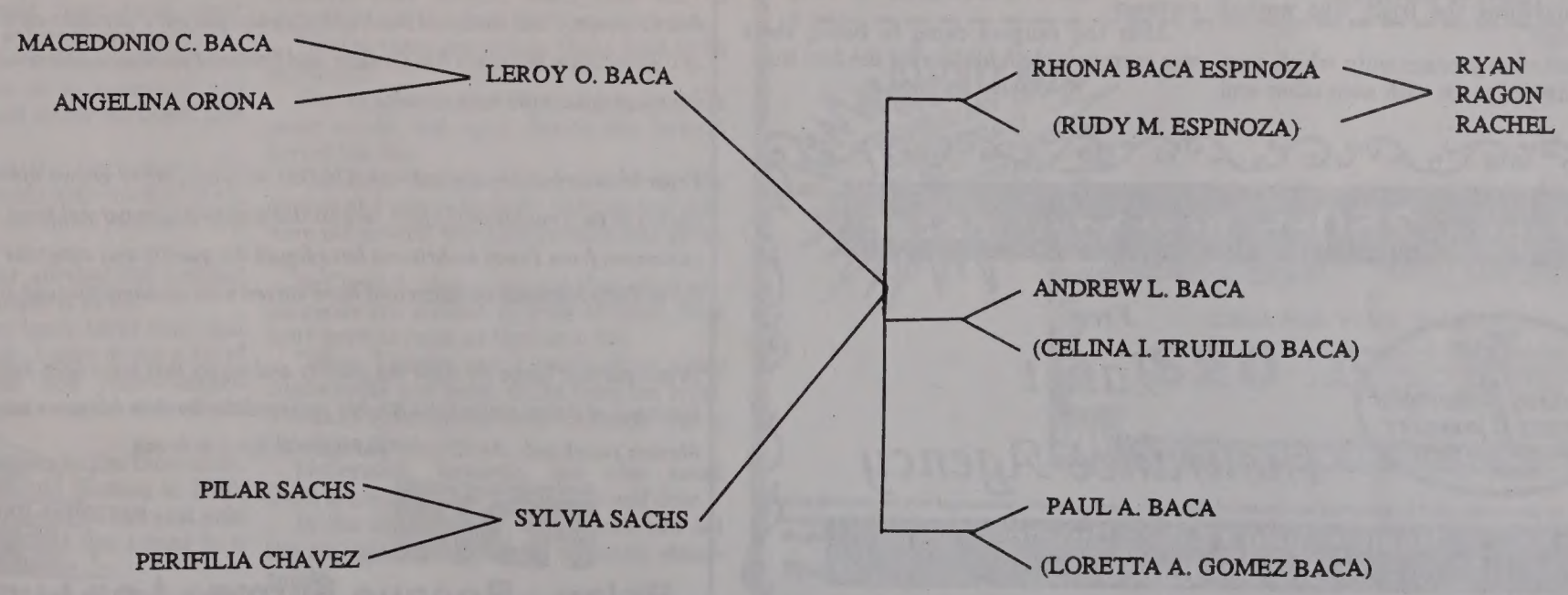


OUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY TREE



PART OF THE PAST, PART OF THE FUTURE

1301 SOUTH MAIN STREET BELEN, NEW MEXICO 87002

Belen history

(Continued from Page 2)

killing or maiming or carrying off in the raids women and children.

Realizing that they were also the victims of these wild Indian raids, the pueblos formed a military alliance with the Spanish in order to survive.

That strong alliance survives to this day.

We know that the Pueblo Indians were friendly people, they were noble people that soon adopted the Catholic religion.

If you go to Isleta Pueblo today, you will find in the center of the plaza a Catholic Church and an active choir which sings the Mass.

The new colony thrived and grew despite of the many troubles and tribulations.

COLONIAL MILITIAS

By the year 1790, Belen had been divided into six plazas, or semi-military civilian posts, with a *commandante* in charge of the plaza and its military protection.

They had a few guns such as the *escopeta*, which is a flint-lock gun.

The majority of the soldiers were foot soldiers or infantry with about one-third of them mounted on horseback.

The six plazas were scattered all the way from Belen to Jarales on the south, a distance of approximately four miles.

The military protection from records of the early times recalls the poor condition of the colony, but showed the determined spiritual resistance and character of the colony.

NEW FLAGS AND NEW PEOPLES

New Mexico, we must remember, was under the Spanish flag from 1540 to 1821 and from 1821 to 1845 under the Mexican flag.

Finally, after General Kearney conquered New Mexico with the New American Conquest Army in 1846, New Mexico became a part of the United States from that date onward.

So, we know that the history of this community, as well as the character, has been under three different sovereignties, cultures and histories.

We also know that this has molded the character of its people as we know it today.

The Hispanic, Anglo-American, yes the Germans and the Italians and the different ethnic groups that came in with the new immigration including the Irish, who worked on the railroad.

This resulted in a community which soon learned to live in peace with each other and to promote a better Belen.

A harmonious bonding of the different cultures is well illustrated here in Belen — how Americans can get together and understand and appreciate each other's heritage and way of life.

DICHOS, THE FAMILY AND HERBS THAT CURE

The Belen area and the Rio Grande Valley has deep pockets of Spanish culture which survive to this day.

There are many Hispanic families which dominate, to a great extent, the present character and culture of Belen, as represented by the survivors of the original Spanish families that settled this area.

These families preserve close knit family ties.

Ties with the church, the life that goes on around the closely knit family who get together at the matanza, the birthdays, the church events, the weddings and funerals as a way of life.

We know that, for example, the *dichos*, or proverbs, survived in this date and that many of the local people use the proverbs to express themselves in the Hispanic home life.

We have the *remedios*, or medicine, that the Spanish brought here and have preserved together with the Indian medicines which were themselves using natural medicines because, as we know, there were no doctors or pharmacies in the early community life.

This history of Belen is well illustrated today in the home and you do not have to dig too deep to realize that it is a living culture and that this is what makes Belen different from other communities around the United States.

THE RAILROAD'S IMPACT ON BELEN

The history of Belen may be divided into two economic periods: the period before the coming of the railroad and the coming of the railroad in 1880.

Mr. Jose Dolores Cordova, an old timer now deceased from Jarales, told me that before the railroad arrived, there was no money, no currency: Everything was bartered.

If you wanted to buy a cow, you could trade so many ristras of chili, corn or products of the soil. However, there was no money currency.

After the railroad came to Belen, there was currency in circulation for the first time.

(Continued on Page 6)

Happy 250th Birthday Belen

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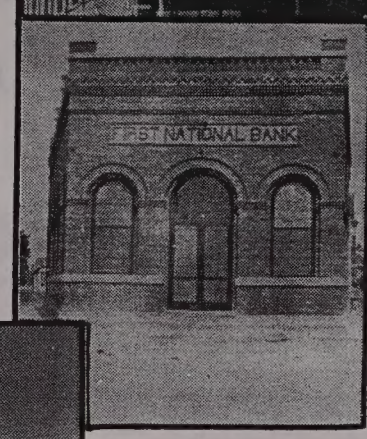

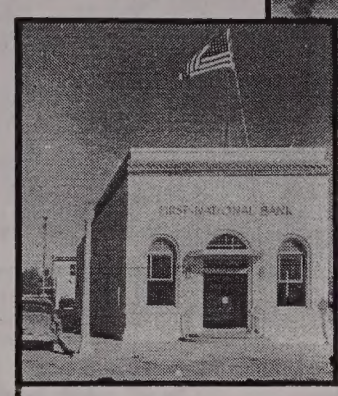

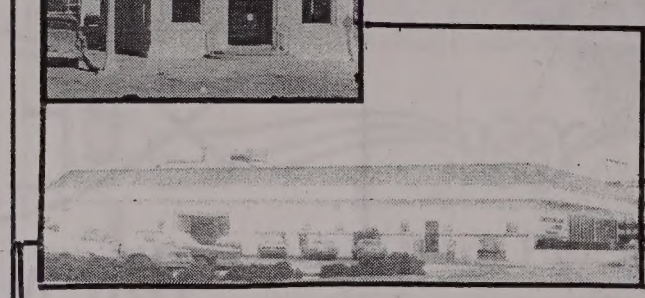

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Photo by Gordon Martinez

Longtime Belen resident Hank McCormick points out one of the few remaining swamps near Belen. Swampland once covered thousands of acres across Valencia County.

Remembering city's early years

by GORDON A. MARTINEZ
Student Intern

BELEN — According to 74-year-old Louis "Hank" McCormick, the ecology of the Belen area is the feature of the city that has changed the most over the years.

"It (the ecology) is one of the most important things as far as I'm concerned," said McCormick.

McCormick said there were thousands of acres of swamps and huge sandbars along the river at which birds such as Canadian geese could rest.

McCormick gave the *News-Bulletin* a visual tour of the valley to illustrate his point.

The area west of Leonard Castillo Sand and Gravel up to and including where Wal-Mart, Casey Luna and the county fairgrounds now are, and east down to the river, "was all swampland ankle deep. Thousands of acres of swampland."

Now, there is only one swamp left behind the fairgrounds with its complement of cattails and other vegetation.

The Rio Grande itself has also changed.

"In June, the river would be at flood stage. The river would flush itself every spring. About now, it would be receding.

"What we have now is a controlled flow," due to the half dozen or so reservoirs and flood control dams built in the northern part of the state.

"It used to be said the river was 1,000 miles long, one mile wide and one foot deep. Man has changed it so much you can't say that anymore."

The river's changes affected the number of swamps and the variety of birds.

"I'd say there were more birds then and different kinds of birds. I used to see a lot of red-winged blackbirds and yellow-headed blackbirds. Now, you can't see them anymore.

"There used to be ducks by the thousands. I remember when I started hunting in 1930, I would walk from my home on the east side of Belen and walk towards Los Lunas in a day.

"I would sometimes get so many ducks that when I was in Los Chavez, I would have to hitch a ride back home."

McCormick also recalls when the bag limit for ducks was 25. Now, it's down to one mallard hen. He also noted the hunting season was longer.

"The pheasants have disappeared. Do you realize that the pheasant was planted in New Mexico in 1930 in Belen?"

McCormick attributes the loss of bird diversity to man encroaching on their habitat.

"Look at that field. There are now trailers in most every field and most of those trailers have a dog or cat."

McCormick also sees less of a particular Belen feature.

"The change of ecology has affected the entire valley. I don't see black geese anymore, just white geese.

"Black geese, they're grazers. When there used to be flour mills, Belen raised wheat. Now, the geese would stop to eat the wheat. A friend and I would try to come up with ways to scare the geese out of the field so we could get them.

"When the wheat was gone, the geese were gone with it."

Man also wrecked the geeses' rest stop by getting rid of the river's sandbars.

"The conservancy people built jetties (large x-shaped bars and wire in a fence like manner) that caught trash and silt to straighten out the river like they wanted it.

"Where there are jetties, there used to be sandbars."

The sandbars, said McCormick, is what geese would rest upon during the hottest part of the day.

The river has also been altered by the ditches and canals built for flood control that were not around when McCormick was growing up.

McCormick also points out that since cottonwoods are allowed to grow so thick, they don't grow as large as they once did.

"When I had a car, I would drive along Highway 85 and scout ducks from the river. You can't even see the river anymore" due to the dense trees.

McCormick, however, has also noted there are sightings of wild turkey and deer.

In the end, however, McCormick can see the ecological change from different standpoints.

"I'm not saying it's better. I'm not saying it's worse.

"From an economic standpoint, (the changes) have been great. From a practical standpoint, things would be probably best left alone."

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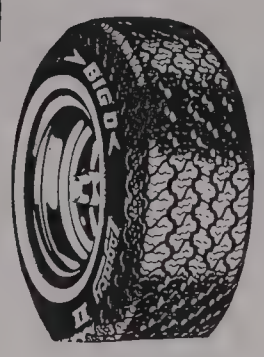

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Belen history

(Continued from Page 4)

The railroad paid its employees with U.S. currency and soon, those dollars began to show up in the local stores and circulate around.

The community of Belen began to prosper and grow as one of the leading thriving towns in new Mexico.

PRESENT-DAY BELEN

Modern Belen was incorporated in the year 1918, which was historically the time of World War I.

It has continued to grow and to spread as a community until today where we have approximately 9,000 inhabitants living in Belen proper.

The railroad still plays an important part in the economic life of Belen.

It is called the Hub City because the Santa Fe Railroad runs through Belen going east and west, north and south — the four points of the compass.

This means a great deal to the community because the Santa Fe Railroad is a sizable employer with a substantial payroll.

In addition to that, Belen has continued to attract small industry which has been brought about by the Chamber of Commerce, Valencia County Economic Development Committee and local community leaders, including the local city government and this has given it quite a boost.

Belen is also fortunate in a way that it is close to Albuquerque, only 30 miles away.

The new Interstate-25 highway affords excellent transportation to those who commute to Albuquerque to their jobs.

Belen has been called the bedroom of Albuquerque, the largest metropolis in New Mexico, because of the many commuters that travel daily from Belen to Albuquerque to their jobs and bring home the payroll.

That payroll helps the local economy and the local merchants. Belen also has a good educational system and a fine physical accommodation plant.

New industry is developing and the Chamber of Commerce of the town of Belen has been active, aggressive, enthusiastic and has contributed a great deal to the new growth and the bright outlook for the town.

East across the Rio Grande, what began as a retirement community, is Rio Communities. It has grown rapidly over two decades to approximately 3,500 people now living there.

It represents an All-American community with transplants of diverse backgrounds from California to Chicago to New York.

Local color can be found in the small farming communities surrounding Belen, including Pueblitos, Jarales, Casa Colorada and Los Chavez and Tomé.

The relaxed rural atmosphere of these areas has also made them attractive for continuing residential development.

RECUERDO SUS RAISES

Belen still retains its historic character today, as well as its cultural and deep rooted traditions.

There is an old saying that goes, "Learn the history of your community so that you appreciate its past and better understand its future."

If the giants of Hispanic history: Christopher Columbus, who discovered America almost 500 years ago; Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, the first discoverer of New Mexico; Juan de Oñate, the first colonist of New Mexico who established in 1598 the first colony of San Juan de Los Caballeros in Northern New Mexico; or Don Diego De Vargas, who led the new *entrada* into New Mexico after the 1680 Pueblo Indian revolt — if they were reincarnated today and returned to Belen for the 250th Anniversary, they would probably be amazed how much of the Spanish culture, roots, image and character has been preserved right here in this community as we approach the Quincentennial of the European discovery of the New World.

They would be able to communicate with many of the local residents in the language of Cervantes, the Spanish writer of all times.

In closing, I would like to say,

"VIVA BELEN! VIVA THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY!"

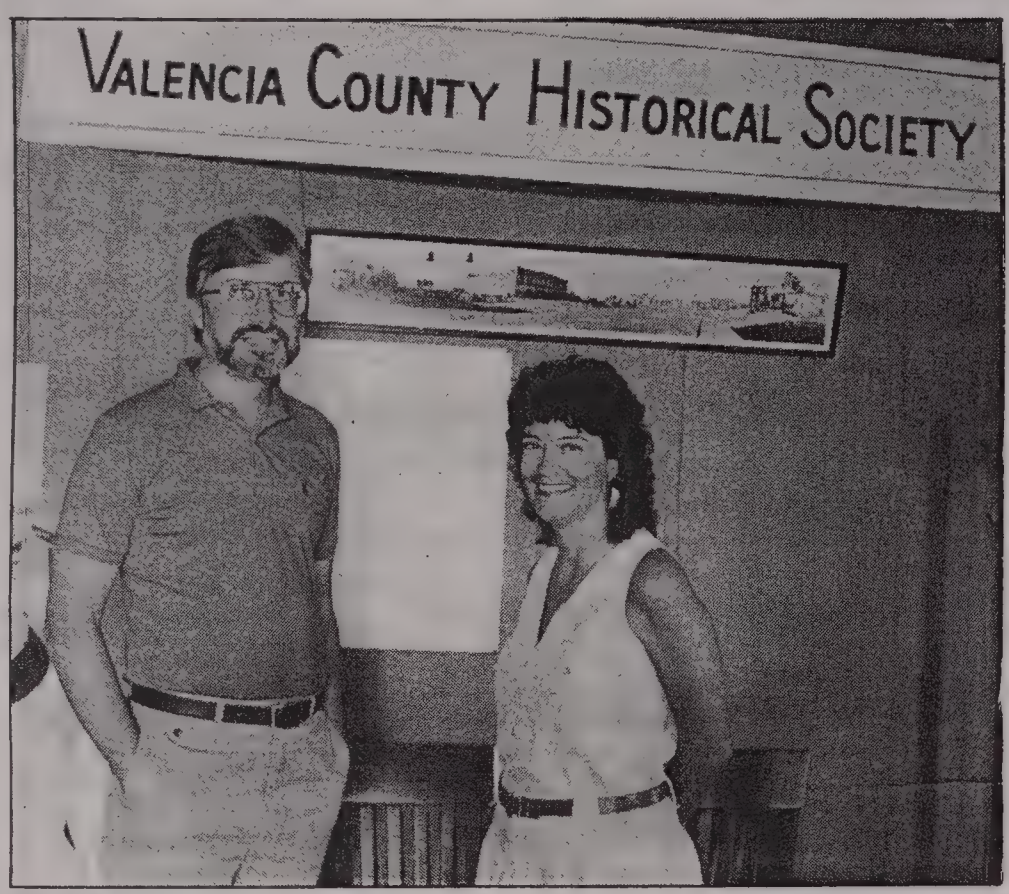

Photo by Gordon Martinez

Richard Melzer (right) and Maggie McDonald serve as president and vice-president of the Valencia County Historical Society.

Society tracks history

by GORDON A. MARTINEZ
Student Intern

BELEN — In operation for more than 20 years, the Valencia County Historical Society has one mission.

"For everyone to know about the history of the community and area," said Maggie McDonald, vice-president of the society.

The largest operation undertaken by the society is the maintenance of the county museum located at the Harvey House (see related story).

Other activities undertaken by the society include doing an exhibit at the county fair, periodic lectures about county history, field trips to historical sites around the county and state, sponsoring a historical photo contest in conjunction with the *News-Bulletin* and an annual awards banquet.

The society, according to society president Dr. Richard Melzer, is planning to get into the postcard business with county historical scenes and is in the process of developing more historical publications.

The society in 1981 put out the book Rio Abajo Heritage detailing histories of the towns, areas and families in the Rio Abajo.

The book has been donated by the society to all local and state college libraries to preserve the history of Valencia County. The book reports that the idea of the society was launched by the Belen Pilot Club, a women's organization, in the late 1960s.

A survey taken by the club in 1968 indicated sufficient interest in forming a society interested in preserving the history of Valencia County.

In 1969, a meeting was called at which the 100 attending voted unanimously to form the Valencia County Historical Society.

The society is currently 68 members strong and is looking to grow.

"We're very interested in expanding our membership and activities," said Melzer.

In the end, however, the best reason to be aware and involved in the society, according to McDonald is, "If you know the past, you'll know the future."

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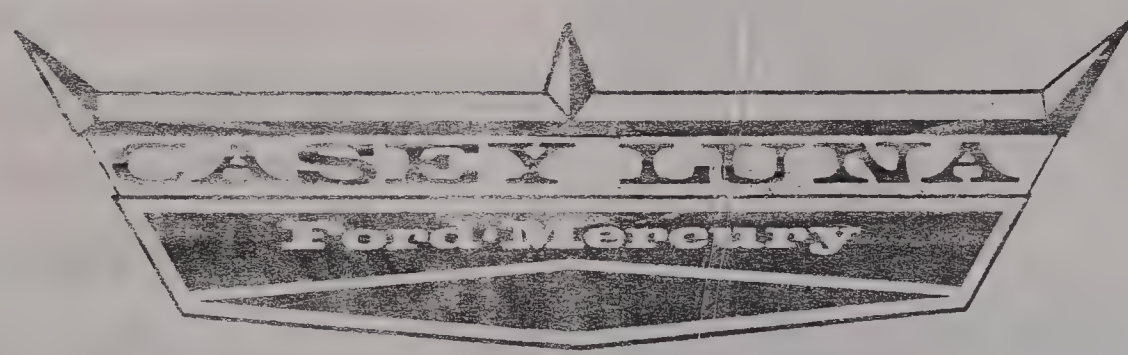

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FR. MARTIN JENCO ★ "GOLDEN BOY" ART ARAGON ★ GEN. LEO MARQUEZ ★ BERNARD JACOBSON

GINO CHAVEZ

MICHOLINE MOLINA

Photos courtesy of Kristine Gueldenzoph Chavez

Viva Valencianas!

Dance group keeps cultural link alive between county and Valencia, Spain

BELEN — Las Valencianas, in many ways, represents the ideal that the Valencia County Cultural Program is striving to achieve.

The goal of the program, begun in 1988, is to establish a sister communities relationship between the people of Valencia County, New Mexico and Valencia, Spain that, according to the group, will be "a relationship encompassing an educational, business and cultural exchange."

The program also intends to help to keep and expand awareness of Hispanic traditions, including the history of the county, the arts, folklore and philosophy inherited by the community.

Las Valencianas, a dance group of youth dancers open to those ages 5-17, has strived to attain the program's goals.

The 25-member group is composed of male and female students from all parts of the county.

While learning about Hispanic history and culture, they participate in parades, fairs and special events.

The costumes members of Las Valencianas wear reflect the relationship sought by the cultural program.

"The dresses are made of a material not available in the United States," said Tibo Chavez, Jr., president of the cultural program.

"The material is very detailed in, usually, a floral pattern in as many colors as you can imagine."

The material is imported from Valencia, Spain. The floral designs are inspired by the flora of Valencia.

"Valencia is the garden region of Spain. The Huerta de Valencia is one of the most fertile regions in the world.

"In fact, when Columbus landed in the New World, he wrote to the king and queen of Spain that the area he discovered was as lush as the Huerta de Valencia," said Chavez.

Though many of the costumes were made in Valencia, a majority of the costumes were tailored here based upon traditional patterns, according to cultural program activities director Diana DeBaca-Luna.

The group has performed for audiences at the Belen Harvey House, the Los Lunas Hospital and Training School, the Belen Cinco de Mayo celebration and at the All Arts Festival.

Las Valencianas will be playing a key role

(Continued on Page 9)

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Aug. 8, 1990

Belen's 250th schedule of events

Friday, Aug. 10

7 to 9 p.m. — Gala birthday party at Tierra Del Sol Country Club featuring classic New Mexico cuisine. Live entertainment provided by Pedro Sepulveda and Los Mariachi Nuevo Tampico, Luis Campos and Lili del Castillo Flamenco and Las Valencianas.
9 p.m. to 1 a.m. — Dance with Jerry Jaramillo and The Brown River Band.

Saturday, Aug. 11

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Arts and Crafts Fair, Anna Becker Park and tour of Willie Chavez State Park.
3 to 5 p.m. — Presentation to Las Valencianas, Belen High School Auditorium.

Sunday, Aug. 12

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. — Arts and Crafts Fair, Anna Becker Park.
11 a.m. — Walking tour of Belen, Plaza Cafe.
6 p.m. — Las Valencianas procession, city hall to Our Lady of Belen church.

Monday, Aug. 13

6:30 p.m. — Lecture by Steven Glenn, "Developing Capable People." BHS auditorium.
8 p.m. — Performance by Las Valencianas, BHS auditorium.

Tuesday, Aug. 14

5 to 6 p.m. — Mayors' evening, a reception for past and present mayors at city hall.
7 to 8 p.m. — Harvey House lecture, "History of Belen" by Judge Tibo Chavez Sr.
8 to 9 p.m. — Mayors' evening continued with presentation of awards, Harvey House.

Wednesday, Aug. 15

7 p.m. — Harvey House lecture, "History of Los Lunas" by Pauline Jaramillo.

Thursday, Aug. 16 though Saturday, Aug. 18

No events scheduled.

Sunday, Aug. 19

6 p.m. — Valencia County Historical Society dinner/dance, Harvey House.

Las Valencianas

(Continued from Page 8)

in the celebration of Belen's 250th anniversary celebration.

On August 10, the group will entertain at the 250th Gala Birthday Party.

August 11 from 3 to 5 p.m. and August 13 at 8 p.m., Las Valencianas can be seen at the Belen High School auditorium.

A procession by Las Valencianas from City Hall to Our Lady of Belen church will happen August 12 at 6 p.m.

The last scheduled appearance of Las Valencianas for the 250th celebration will be at the Valencia County Parade August 18.

For the parade, two horses bedecked in Valenciana-style costumes will carry the two non-dancing queens, Laurie Jaramillo and Loretta Lueras.

Las Valencianas dancers are Micholine Molina, Carrie Gurule, Gino Chavez, Trisha Gurule, Jennifer Tafoya, Paul Gurule, Bridgette Hirshchfeld, Lynda Martinez, Jennifer Anderson, Nathaniel Martinez and Deborah Pino.

Also, Josephine Molina, Irene Moya, Jennifer Atencio, Sasha Mast, Andrea Ortega, Christopher Trujillo, Rick Mares, Andrew Molina, Anthony DeBaca, Daniel Sanchez, Lenore Aragon and Timothy Chavez.

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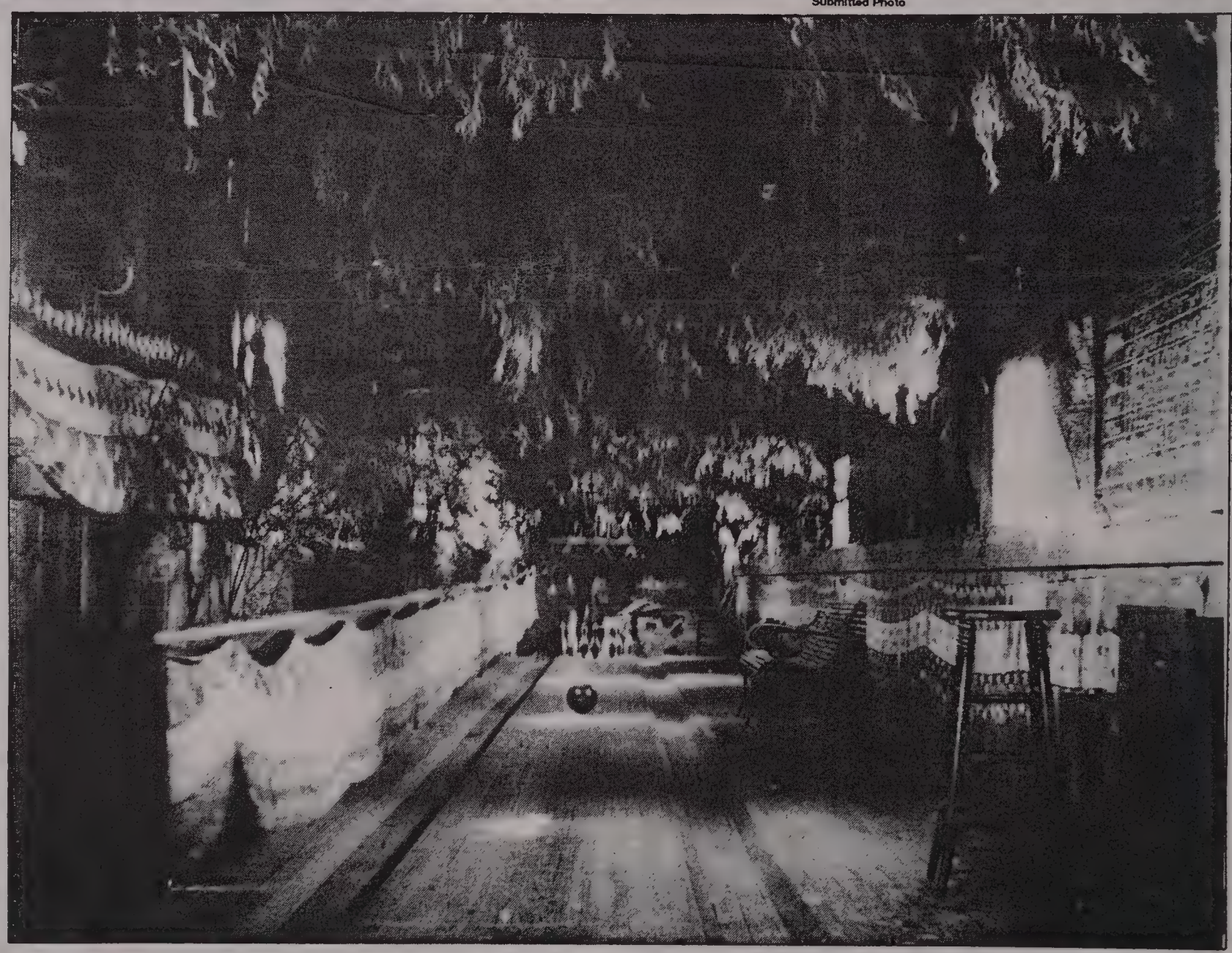
Submitted Photo

Historical photo contest champion

This historical photograph captures a moment during the March 30, 1922, burial of Andres Garcia in front of Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church. Submitted in the Valencia County Historical Society's photo contest by Solomon Garcia, the photograph depicts three priests celebrating the funeral Mass, with Fr. Antonio Cellier in the center as the principal celebrant. Andres Garcia's sons and one son-in-law served as pallbearers. All the pallbearers are wearing black shirts and white gloves. Many of the women are wearing the topalo, or shawl, a traditional Hispanic sign of mourning. For having his photo chosen as the first-place entry, Garcia was awarded $100.



Submitted Photo

Early bowlers

This photograph of early-day Belen, submitted by Mary Jane Tucker in the Historical Society's photograph contest, shows the bowling alley in the old Commercial Club (located where the Masonic building stands today). Pins were spotted by hand and score was kept on a chalk board on the wall. The photograph was named second-place winner in the contest, earning Tucker prize money of $75.

Submitted Photo

Parade of the past

Virginia Chavez submitted this photograph of the Our Lady of Belen Fiesta Procession which took place Aug. 15, 1947, on Main Street in Belen. The photograph was selected as the third-place winner in the Valencia County Historical Society's historical photograph contest. Prize money for third place was $50.

Looking back

Saturnino Baca founded newspaper

(From July 25, 1940, edition of *The Belen News*.)

Saturnino Baca, lifelong resident of Valencia County and founder of ***The Belen News*** and *El Hispano Americano*, died at his home in Belen on Thursday, July 18, after battling illness for two years.

Baca founded the Belen papers in 1910 starting the first plant in the garage of his home.

In addition to founding the papers, Baca served as the first county school superintendent under statehood for 11 years.

Previous to becoming superintendent, he was one of the first teachers in the county where he taught for several years.

Baca is survived by his wife, six sons and three daughters.

Herman, Elfego G., Eddie and Ernest of Belen; Dennis of Albuquerque and Gilbert of Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Joe E. Romero of Las Vegas, Mrs. Alex Read of Santa Fe and Miss Lena Baca of Belen.

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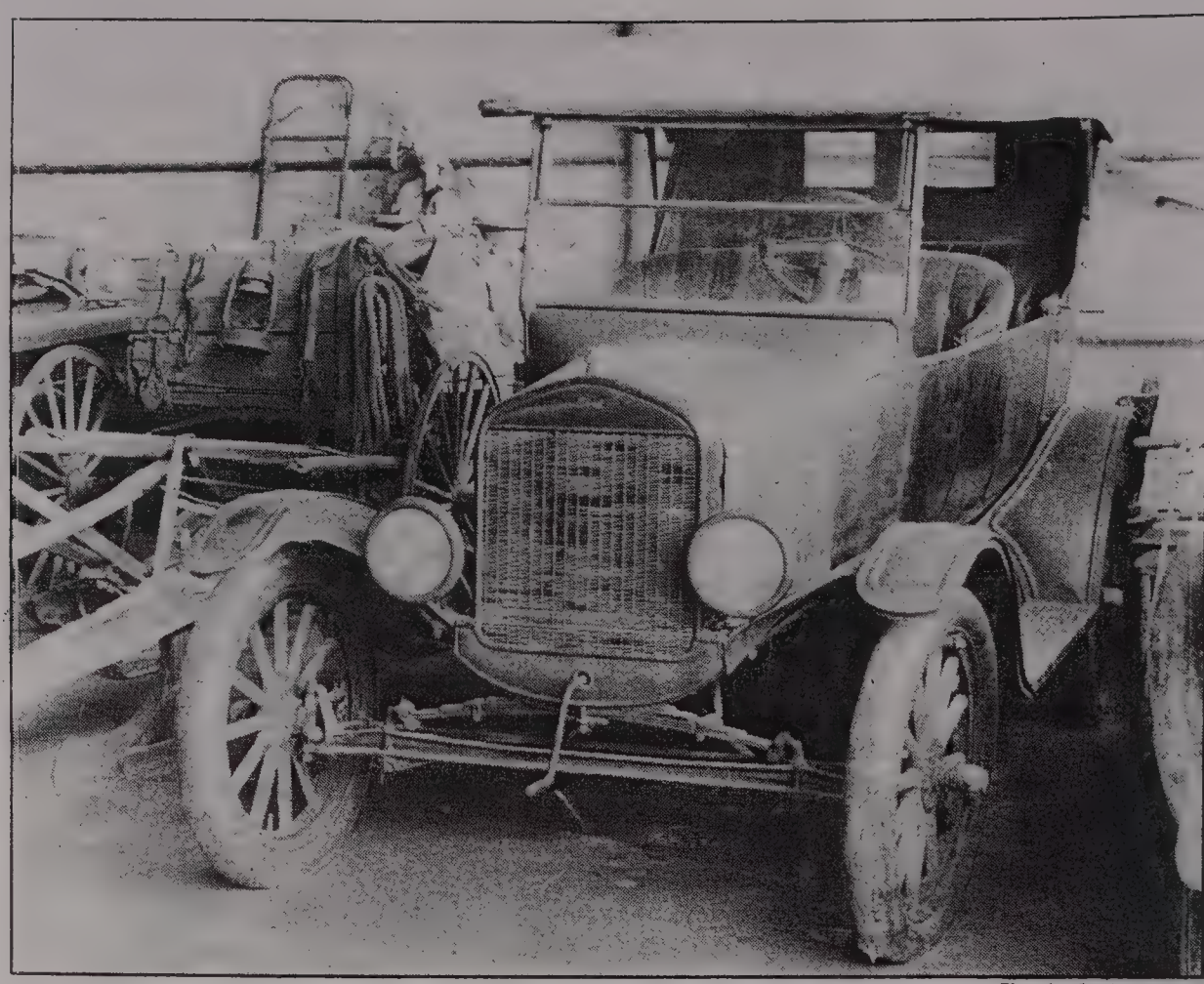

Photo by Gordon Martinez

P&M Museum

Located at 478 Jarales Road, P&M Museum offers a look back into the past through the heirlooms of Pablo and Manuela Chavez. Exhibits at the museum range from a prehistoric dinosaur tooth and jaw to a collection of 1960s Barbie dolls. The museum also offers an extensive look at New Mexico life from the 18th and 19th centuries with an old railroad bunkhouse and a wide collection of agricultural and automotive relics such as a 1929 Model T, covered wagons and still running Case and Ford tractors dating many years.

Valencia County Fair events

Sunday, Aug. 12

Starting at 8:30 a.m. — All-Breed Horse Show. Valencia County Horse Association's Arena. Free Admission.

Wednesday, Aug. 15

All Day — Set-up day for carnival.
4:30 p.m. — Start receiving market livestock (scale will not be open).
10 p.m. — Fair gates close every day of fair.

Thursday, Aug. 16

6 a.m. — Livestock gates open every day of the fair.
8:30 a.m. — General meeting of livestock exhibitors (mandatory for junior exhibitors).
8:30 a.m. — Market livestock entries close (all market livestock are to be at the fairgrounds and in pens). Livestock gates close.
9 a.m. — Swine weigh-in.
10 a.m. — General entries for all exhibits open.
10:30 a.m. — Cabrito weigh-in.
11:30 a.m. — Lamb weigh-in and classifying.
3 p.m. — Steer weigh-in and hip height measurement.
3:30 p.m. — Breeding livestock will again be accepted at the livestock gate.
4:30 p.m. — All other livestock entries close.
4:30 p.m. — 4-H project exhibits close.
6 p.m. — General entries for all exhibits close.
6 p.m. — Rabbit and poultry entries close.
6:30 p.m. — General exhibit judging (closed to public).
7 p.m. — KARS-True Value Western Talent Showdown. Show ring at the fairgrounds.

Friday, Aug. 17

8 a.m. to 10 p.m. — Gates open to the public every day of fair.
8 a.m. — Judge market hogs. (All judging at show ring unless noted.)
9 a.m. — Exhibits open for display.
9 a.m. — Judge rabbit and poultry.
9:30 a.m. - Judge market steers.
10 a.m. — Poultry showmanship contest.
10:30 a.m. — Judge breeding heifers.
11:30 a.m. — Judge market cabritos.
1:30 p.m. — Judge market lambs.
4 p.m. — Judge breeding livestock.
5 to 6 p.m. — Fiddler's contest registration. Information booth in commercial building.
5 p.m. — Rabbit showmanship contest.
6:30 p.m. — Fiddler's contest. Show ring.
7:30 p.m. — Valencia County Rodeo sponsored by the Valencia County Sheriff's Posse. Rodeo arena.
Introduction of county queen candidates at rodeo and crowning of county sweetheart.
9 p.m. — Western dance after rodeo. Posse hall.
10 p.m. — Livestock gates close today and tomorrow.

Saturday, Aug. 18

8 a.m. — Judge dairy cattle.
9 a.m. — Exhibits open for display.
9 to 11 a.m. — Chile contest entries open. North wing of commercial building.
9:30 a.m. — Judge dairy goats.
10 a.m. — Valencia County Fair Parade sponsored by the Greater Belen Chamber of Commerce.
11:30 a.m. — Chile contest. North wing of commercial building.
11:30 a.m. — Junior livestock market animals showmanship contest.
4:30 p.m. — Special Games for Children Show. For children 8 years old and under not showing. Show ring.
5 p.m. — Pet parade. Show ring.
6 p.m. — Dog obedience show. Show ring.
7:30 p.m. — Rodeo and crowning of the fair queen and princess. Western dance after the rodeo.

Sunday, Aug. 19

7:30 a.m. — All-around junior livestock showmanship contest.
9 a.m. — Exhibits open for display.
9:30 a.m. — Mandatory junior livestock sale exhibitors' meeting.
11:30 a.m. — County fair awards program. Show ring. Trophies, ribbons, etc. will be awarded at this time to all winners.
1 p.m. — Junior livestock sale.
3 p.m. — Breeding and dairy stock release.
5 to 6 p.m. — Releasing of exhibits and commercial booths (applies to all departments).

Our Lady of Belen Fiestas

Friday, Aug. 10

7 p.m. — Crowning of Fiesta Queen
9 p.m. — Burning of the Devil and fireworks display
9 p.m. to Midnight — Carpa (Tent) Dance with DJ Wayne Gallegos

Saturday, Aug. 11

10 a.m. Fiesta Parade
End of parade until 1 p.m. — Carpa with Gallegos
1 to 2 p.m. — Sunshine Generation
2 to 3 p.m. — Peralta Spanish Choir
3 to 4 p.m. — Las Valencianas
4 to 6 p.m. — Johnny Griego and Lonnie Silva Group
6 to 7:30 p.m. — Musicos de Cristo (Ruben Barreras and Group)
8 p.m. to Midnight — Carpa with the Mel Sanchez Band

Sunday, Aug. 12

11 a.m. — Enchilada Dinner at parish hall
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. — Carpa with the Toby Jaramillo Group
1 to 2 p.m. — Las Valencianas
2 to 4 p.m. — Musicos de Cristo
4 to 5 p.m. — Ascension Church Youth Choir
5 to 7 p.m. — Regina's Dance Studio
7 to 8 p.m. — Bailarinos de San Clemente
8 p.m. to Midnight — Carpa with the Blanco y Negro Band

Monday, Aug. 13

8 to 11 p.m. — Carpa with DJ Richard Padilla

Tuesday, Aug. 14

5 to 7 p.m. — Carpa with Gallegos
7 p.m. — Vespers and Mass
8 p.m. to Midnight — Carpa with the Alfred and Anthony Band

Wednesday, Aug. 15

5:30 p.m. — Fiesta Mass. Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez, celebrant
8 p.m. to Midnight — Carpa with El Dueto Alegre-Ramon y Lydia with Jerry Starr
10 p.m. — Raffle drawing during Carpa

Fiesta Padrinos: Salomon and Lucy Maestas
Eddie and Jenny DeAnda
Parade Marshal: Eligia Torres

In addition to the events listed, a carnival will be operating every evening during the Fiesta and Bingo games starting Saturday evening.

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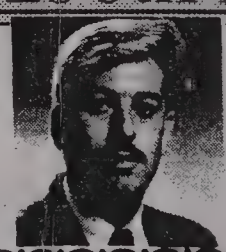
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Jim Willshire 1960-61
Glen Brown 1961-62
Phil Fenn 1962-66
Robert Whitis 1971-78
A. Carl Treat 1978-84
C. Edward Ditterline 1984
James E. Large 1985-
Maurice Haines 1966-67
C.C. Dorn 1967-71
We are proud of our local Belen heritage and look forward to serving the people of our community for the next 250 years.

Harvey House museum holds images of past

by GORDON A. MARTINEZ
Student Intern

BELEN — Scenes that hark back to the forlorn days of yesteryear await one at the Valencia County Museum located at the Harvey House Civic Centre.

Open since 1985, the museum is operated by the Valencia County Historical Society.

The museum, according to society vice-president Maggie McDonald, has averaged 520 visitors per year from around the world.

"The figure, however, doesn't include school groups since we have the teacher sign-in instead of each student. So the number is much higher," said McDonald.

The museum receives no public money and is supported through private donations.

In fact, all of the displays in the museum were donated.

"Most (exhibits) date from the 1800s," said McDonald.

The self-guided tour is structured so that one looks at the exhibits based upon the rooms one would see in an 18th century home.

The tour begins by stopping at a living room set-up with an organ. Next is a dining room with antique silverware and dining set.

An old-fashioned kitchen is next with wood stove and antique cookware. A children's exhibit featuring handmade dolls and toys is next along the tour.

The next stop is a revolving exhibit which currently features a display of Boy Scout gear.

The display is changed every four months and will soon change to a display featuring items commemorating Belen's 250th anniversary.

Santa Fe Railroad papers, gear and uniforms are set aside which precede historical photos of the First National Bank of Belen.

County businesses are represented in a room with equipment and machinery of bygone eras.

Photo by Gordon Martinez

This Murphy Bed is folded, when not in use, to look like a chest of drawers. It is on display at the historical museum.

A room is also set aside to preserve memories of the Harvey Girls, instituted by Santa Fe Railroad's Fred Harvey.

"They were waitresses who were hired to work in restaurants along the Santa Fe Railroad," said McDonald.

"They were actively recruited and well-respected. Many of the waitresses of the time were not as well-respected as the Harvey Girls," said society president Dr. Richard Melzer.

Harvey would put the Harvey Girls up in rooms where they worked and provided them uniforms above their salary.

"They were mostly from the eastern part of the country and they were part of the easterners that changed the culture of the West," said McDonald.

The final stop on the museum tour leads to the bedroom section which features a Murphy Bed that, when folded, would look like a chest of drawers.

In addition, the museum has genealogical documents and records (census, marriages, deaths) dating back to 1790.

"We have an extensive collection of old photographs and old maps. We even have a copy of the first proposed state constitution dating back to 1850," said Melzer.

The hours for the museum are 2 to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 2:30 to 4 p.m. Wednesday. Admission is free, though donations are encouraged.

Looking back

Belen readies for gold rush celebration

(From April 29, May 6 and 13, 1926, editions of the *Belen News*.)

The American Legion of Belen is preparing for one of the largest festivals ever staged in central New Mexico.

Belen will turn back the clock on May 14-15 to 1849 and be transformed to resemble a heyday in U.S. history.

A romance of the gold rush, this carnival is destined to be known as one of the finest thrilling adventure plays in the Southwest.

Its scene: California of the early days when gold-hungry hordes first swept across the Sierras into the old Spanish state.

For cheer, dramatic intensity and interest, Days of '49 cannot be surpassed. Many of its incidents really occurred.

Proud Spaniards, uncouth miners, gamblers, bravados, ladies of vice and virtue felt the spell of '49 in day of yore. The American Legion has built a venerable city.

The Days of '49 will be kicked off with a daylight fireworks display at 4:30 p.m. May 14 during which a band will play the national anthem.

A parade will wind down Main Street at 5 p.m.

Headlining the entertainment will be the big Escalante Brothers.

In addition, cabaret dancing, Monte Carlo-style gaming, carnival, concessions, tango, games, roulette and much more will be going on continuously both days of the festival.

A boxing/wrestling twin bill will be staged.

Boxing Montana will take on Yellow Peril in 20 rounds of pugilistic action.

Wrestlers Bowling Alley Hotch takes on Joe Stretcher will follow.

The highlight of the first night will be the aerial fireworks display at 8 p.m.

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Looking back

Community's Chamber of Commerce dates back to 1924

(From May 15, 1924, edition of *The Belen News*.)

On May 2, 1924, a number of citizens met at the City Hall for the purpose of organizing a Chamber of Commerce (which would replace the Commercial Club which had served as quasi-chamber.)

The meeting was attended by nearly all the businessmen of the town and a great enthusiasm was shown by all present in organizing and working together for the welfare of Belen.

Several talks were made by many of the citizens discussing the importance of having a good organization and working together and getting for Belen what rightly belongs to it.

After discussing the matter thoroughly, it was decided to organize and elect officers.

Paul B. Dalies was elected chairman of the organization, Waite Keeney first vice-chairman, Manuel Garcia second vice-chairman, Ignacio Aragon y Garcia third vice-chairman, Edwin Leupold secretary, and Louis Carl Becker treasurer.

After the election of officers, the chairman proceeded to appoint a board of directors and the different committees as follows:

Board of Directors

J.H. Becker, Jr.
Dr. E.G. Brentari
Frank Fischer
Paul J. Feil
Dr. T. Espinosa
Rev. A. Cellier
William Ellermyer
Antonio Gilber
John Craig
Dr. W.D. Radcliff

Committee on By-Laws

J.H. Becker, Jr.
F.B. Caloun
Dr. T. Espinosa

Committee on Membership

William LeBrun
Manuel Garcia
Elfego Baca
M.H. Tate
Claude N. Wilson
W.F. Kraft
Jack Oelhart

Committee on Roads and Travel

J.H. Becker, Jr.
Edwin Leupold
W.H. Becker
H.H. Wilson

Committee on Civics

Dr. E.G. Brentari
Dr. S.L. Wilkinson
F.C.H. Livingston

Committee on Publicity

Dr. T. Espinosa
F.B. Calhoun
L.C. Becker
Elfego Baca
E.F. Scheele

Hub City's flood of 1969 causes $2 million in damage

(From June 19, 1969, edition of the *News-Bulletin*.)

The flood damage to the City of Belen and its residents was estimated at $1.5 to $2 million here Wednesday afternoon by City Engineer Dayton Molzen and Mayor Neel Alexander, following an all-day inspection tour.

Molzen said all city services were damaged, but expressed confidence that they could continue to operate while being cleaned and repaired.

The engineer estimated the damages to municipally-owned facilities will run from $675,000 to $925,000.

He broke down the estimates into these figures:

Streets, sidewalks and curbs, $500,000 to $750,000; sewage treatment plant, $100,000; sewer mains, $50,000 to $60,000; and water system, $25,000.

The balance of damage would spread to hundreds of property owners. Alexander estimated more than 200 houses suffered minor to major damage and at least 25 businesses.

Relief is on the way from the Small Business Administration. SBA has declared Belen a disaster area qualifying members of the community for long term, low-interest loans.

Gov. David Cargo has declared Belen a disaster area qualifying it for state assistance.

Cargo said Wednesday that he plans to call President Richard Nixon immediately upon receipt of a formal report from a study group headed by George Hastings, regional director of the federal Office of Emergency Planning.

Among the hardest hit businesses were the Feil and Ellermeyer department store and Tommy's Lounge across the street on Main and Baca.

The basement of the F & E store, loaded with new merchandise, was flooded. Much of the merchandise was damaged or destroyed.

John Wright of the sewer and water section of the State Health Department said late Wednesday he was satisfied with the appearance of the sewer plant south of town.

Mike Salazar, also with the health department, said he would have a report Thursday on bacteriological tests of water samples taken at random over the city.

"Until we know the results of these tests, all domestic water should be boiled," said Salazar.

Alexander understood the Red Cross is replacing personal belongings lost in the flood and in some instances, may re-build homes of destitute owners.

Some 50 families have been moved out of their houses for safety reasons according to Alexander and Molzen.

Streets hardest hit were Gilbert, Didier, Dillon, Rosedale Circle, 10th and 11th.

The west side of town was hurt most by the runoff from the irrigation and drainage ditches, while the area east of Main and south of Reinken suffered most from standing water due to inadequate drainage.

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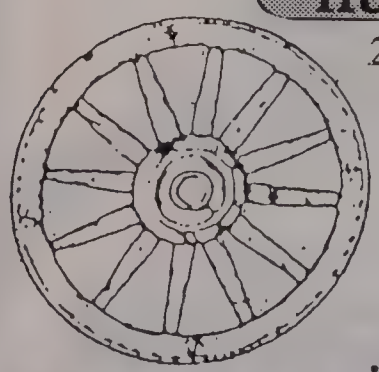

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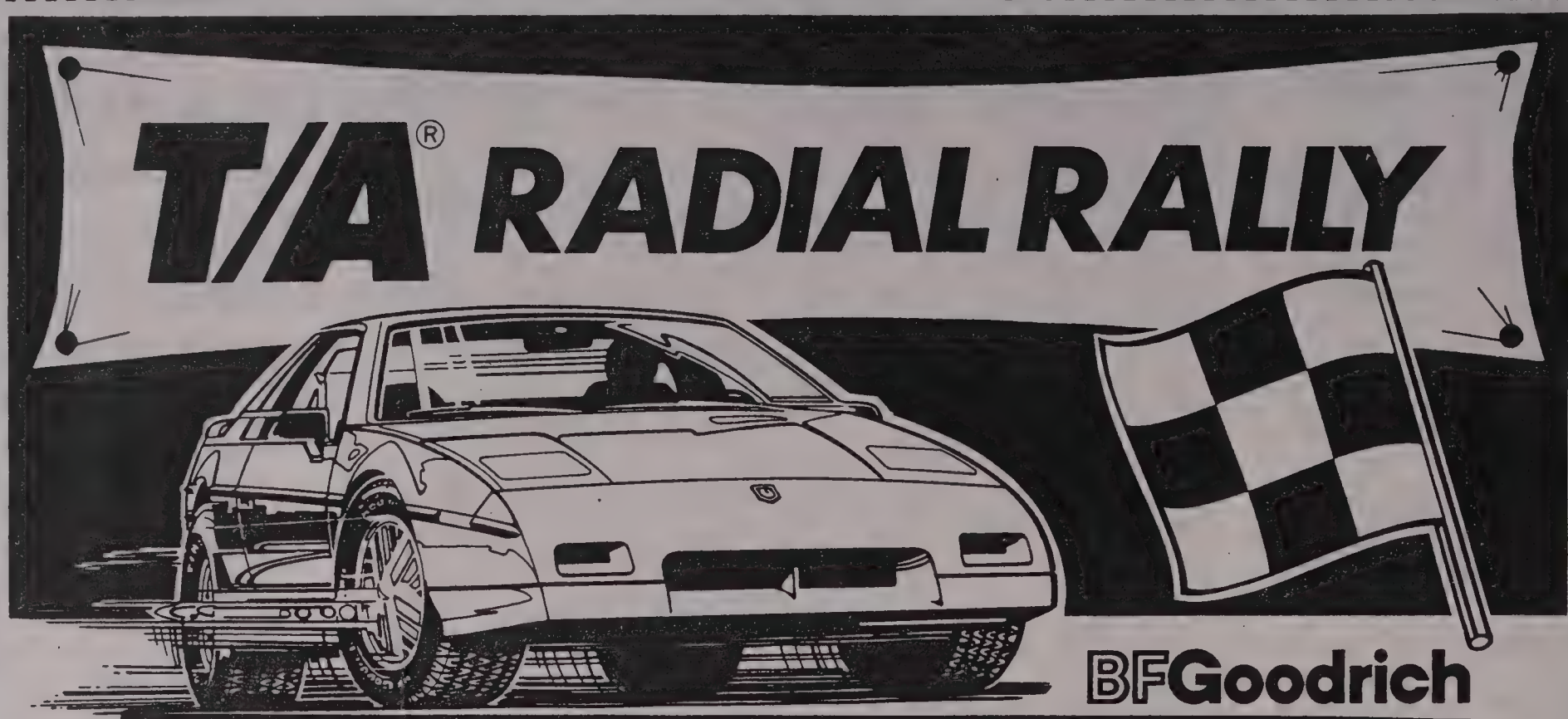

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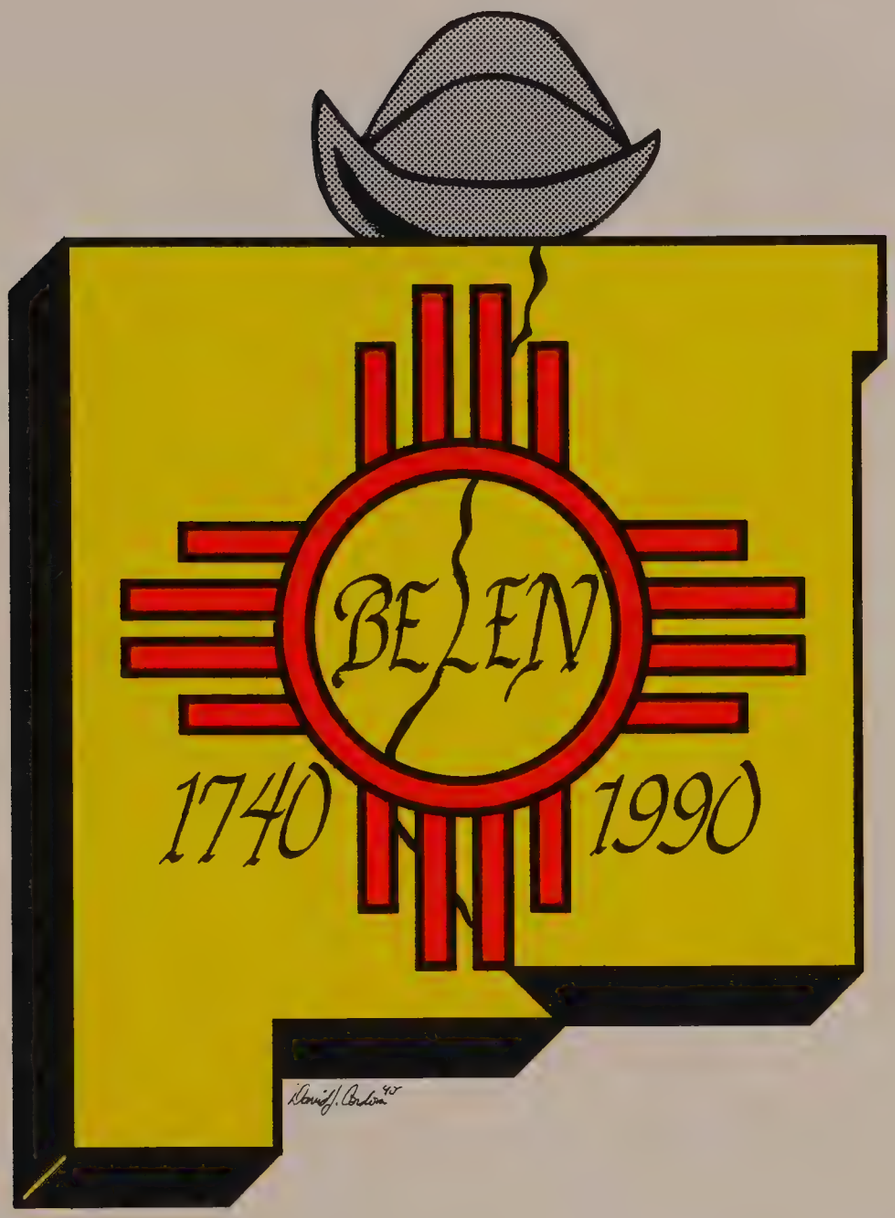
Belen's 250th Anniversary

Commemorative Booklet



**"A Community That Knows Its Past. . .
Plans for Its Future"**

Belen's 250th Anniversary

August 1, 1990

Dear Belenites and Friends:
BIEN VENIDOS!

On behalf of the Belen 250th Anniversary Steering Committee, I cordially invite you to join us in celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Belen.

Members of the Steering Committee are:

Mrs. Diana DeBaca-Luna
Mr. Tibo J. Chavez, Jr.
Mrs. Maggie McDonald
Mr. Rudy Sachs
Mrs. Loretta Gomez-Baca
Mr. Paul Baca
Mrs. Filomena Baca
Mr. Charlie Smith

Many thanks go to all these people, who have devoted countless hours, and hard work in the planning and preparation of the festivities of this historic event. I also want to thank those who have contributed financially, and those who have supported this worthy cause.

Please join us in this memorable celebration commemorating the 250th Anniversary of our great and beautiful city "BELEN".

Thank you.

Again, Welcome to Belen's 250th Anniversary Celebration!
MUCHAS GRACIAS!

DIANA DEBACA-LUNA, Editor

"A Community That Knows Its Past * Plans For Its Future"

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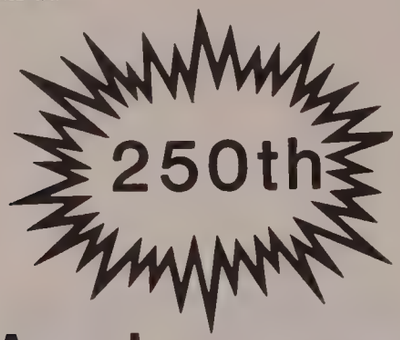
Congratulates Belen on its



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RUDY L. SACHS
MAYOR PRO TEM
JOSE R. PENA
CITY MANAGER

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BELEN, NEW MEXICO 87002
(505) 864-8221 — (505) 865-4994
FAX (505) 864-8408

ERNEST (BENJI) TORRES
COUNCILMAN
SUZANNE M. ROMERO
COUNCILPERSON
GILBERT GARCIA
COUNCILMAN

June 20, 1990

Citizens of Valencia County

"Vamos todos a Belen", a long time Christian expression tied to the visitation of Christ's Birth in Bethlehem.

This seems to be the feeling of citizens of this area that have left Belen, they always come back to this area of their birth because of Belen's heritage and also because the citizens of Belen, pound for pound are as good as you will find anywhere in the world.

Newcomers also once acquainted with Belen will return not only for visitation, but also to live.

As Mayor of this City and on behalf of all Elected Officials and City Staff we welcome you with open arms.

Hoping everyone whether visiting or a permanent resident will enjoy our hospitality.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Aragon

Richard E. Aragon
Mayor

REA/jb

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Photo by Kristine Gueldenzoph Chavez

MAIN STREET LATE 40's

MAIN STREET LOOKING NORTH, CA 1880

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Belen's 250th Schedule of Events

Friday, August 10th

GALA BIRTHDAY PARTY * Tierra Del Sol Country Club

7:00-9:00	Classic New Mexico Cuisine
	Live Entertainment by:
	Pedro Sepulveda & Los Mariachi Nuevo Tapatio
	Luis Campos & Lili del Castillo Flamenco
	Las Valencianas Dancers
9:00-1:00	Dance, Jerry Jaramillo & The Brown River Band
Our Lady of	Belen fiestas begins
7:00	Fiestas Mass, Crowning of Queen
	Burning of the Devil, Fireworks

Saturday, August 11th

Arts and Crafts Fair

9:00-3:00	Anna Becker Park
	Tour of Willie Chavez State Park
	Our Lady of Belen Fiestas Parade
10:00	Adam's Market to OLB
	Presentation to Las Valencianas
3:00-5:00	Belen High School Auditorium

Sunday, August 12th

Arts and Crafts Fair

9:00-3:00	Anna Becker Park
	Walking Tour of Belen
11:00	Plaza Cafe
6:00	City Hall to OLB Church Las Valencianas Procession

Monday, August 13th

Lecture "Developing Capable People" by Steven Glenn

6:30	Belen High School Auditorium
	Sponsored by Belen Schools
8:00	Performance by Las Valencianas

Tuesday, August 14th

Mayors Evening

5:00-6:00	Reception for past and present mayors
	City Hall
7:00-8:00	Harvey House Lecture "History of Belen"
	by Judge Tibo Chavez
8:00-9:00	Mayors evening continued Presentation of Awards
	Harvey House

Wednesday, August 15th

5:00	High Mass - celebrated by Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez
	concelebrated by local clergy

Lecture "History of Los Lunas" by Pauline Jaramillo

7:00	Harvey House

Thursday, August 16th

6:00	Valencia County Fair begins
	Country Music Showdown
	Valencia County Fair Grounds

Friday, August 17th

6:00 Valencia County Fair Fiddlers Contest	
	Valencia County Fair Grounds

Saturday, August 18th

10:00 Valencia County Fair Parade	
	Main Street, Belen

Sunday, August 19th

1:00 Valencia County Fair Junior Livestock Auction	
	Valencia County Fair Grounds
6:00 Valencia County Historical Society * Dinner/Dance	
	Harvey House

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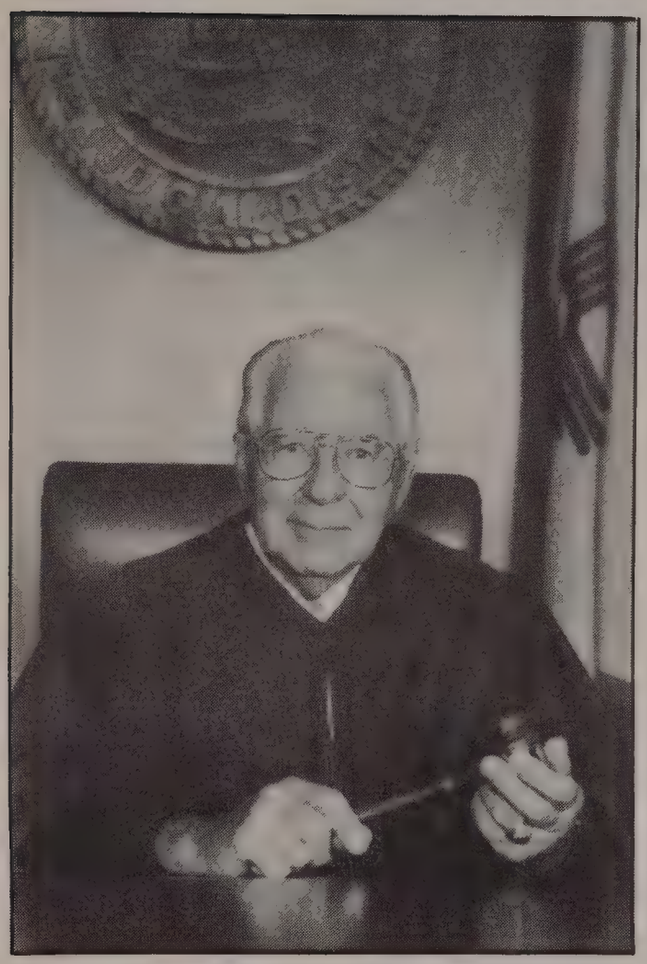
"The 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the Town of Belen"

Written By: Tibo J. Chavez



The religious significance of the City of Belen starts with its name, Belen. What does Belen mean? Belen means Bethlehem, the place of the birth of Jesus Christ in the Holy Land. This tells you something about the christian faith of the founders of the Town of Belen. I remember as a youth going to catholic church with my parents and singing with the congregation in spanish the following alabado, which is a church hymn:

"Vamos todos a Belen, con amor y gozo adoremos al Senor,
Nuestro Redentor".

Which alabado freely translates as follows:

"Let us all go to Belen, on this Christmas morn, let
us all rejoice and sing, Christ the Savior is born".

The original founders of Belen in 1740, or 36 years before the American Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, were Captain Diego de Torres and thirty-two other families. (From El Rio Abajo, history by Chavez and Espinosa).

Belen was situated in the Rio Grande valley, thirty miles south of Albuquerque, which was founded in 1706, a few years before Belen. The Tome and

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Los Chavez Spanish Land Grants were founded in 1739 or one year before the founding of Belen.

The Belen Land Grant consisted of approximately 200,000 acres stretching from the Manzano mountains on the east boundary to the Rio Puerco on the west, and bounded on the north by the Los Chavez and Tome Land Grants. On the south the Land Grant was bounded by the present community of Bernardo approximately twenty miles south of Belen. The Belen colonists, as we can imagine brought with them European seeds for their gardens and agricultural fields and to sustain themselves and their families. They brought with them many seeds, such as wheat, oats, corn,.beans, chili, squash, shrubs, fruit trees of all kinds, apples, apricots, peaches, etc. Also, livestock including cattle, horses, sheep, goats, chickens, etc. Hornos for the baking of bread were brought in by the first settlers in this area and of course we know that the horno was brought into Spain by the Moor's many years ago, when they occupied Spain for 800 years.

The first construction of the spanish hornos occurred here in New Mexico, particularly in Northern New Mexico where they were discovered a few years ago by some of the anthropologists and archaeologists who were doing diggings in the area. Also introduced in the New Spain, or into New Mexico, was the yeast, used to leaven or make the bread rise. The Native Americans we know had agriculture before the arrival of the newcomers, yet it was limited to the planting of corn, beans, squash and melons. Soon the Indians adopted the new farming method and the domestic seeds of the Spanish as well as the fruit trees and it drew them immediately into a new culture and a new way of life. Both the Indians and Spanish gained from this interchange because the Spanish borrowed many things from the Indians, and the Pueblo Indians. What resulted was a very strong alliance with the Spanish in the Valley.

The first colony of Belen soon constructed their homes using adobes for the walls of the homes and for roof support vigas or logs were cut from the cottonwood trees, or better from the pine logs which were cut in the Manzano mountains and hauled over a distance of approximate twenty miles to the valley using old carts or carretas which were also homemade. The church was soon established in the center of the plaza known as Old Town today.

The colony survived because of the fertile soil in the rich agricultural valley of the Rio Grande and abundant pastures of different grasses for the livestock. Soon after the colony was established the marauding wild tribes consisting of the Apaches and Comanches started raiding the new colonies; Raiding their livestock, taking with them food produced by the farmers and killing or maiming or carrying off in the raids women and children. Realizing that they were also the victims of these wild Indian raids, the pueblos formed a military alliance with the Spanish in order to survive. That strong alliance survives to this day. We know that the Pueblo Indians were friendly people, they were noble people and they soon also adopted the Catholic religion. And, if you go to Isleta Pueblo today you will find in the center of the plaza a Catholic Church and an active choir which sings the mass.

The new colony thrived and grew, despite the many troubles and tribulations, and by the year 1790 Belen had been divided into six plazas or semi-military civilian posts with the Commandante in charge of the plaza and military protection. They had a few guns known as the escopeta, which is the flint lock gun. The majority of the soldiers were foot soldiers or infantry and about one-third of them were mounted on horseback. The six plazas were scattered all the way from Belen to Jarales on the south, a distance of approximately four miles. The military protection from records of the early times takes you in a hurry to the poor condition of the colony, but determines spiritual resistance and character of the colony.

New Mexico, we must remember, was under the Spanish flag from 1540 to 1821 and from 1821 to 1845 under the Mexican flag. Finally, after General Kearney conquered New Mexico with the New American Conquest Army in 1846, New Mexico became a part of the United States from that date on.

So we know that the history of this community as well the character has been under these three different flags and under three different sovereignties, cultures and histories and we know that this has molded the character of its people as we know it today. The Hispanic, Anglo American, yes the Germans and the Italians and the different ethnic groups that came in with the new immigration including the Irish, who worked on the railroad, this resulted in a community which soon learned to live in peace with each other and to promote

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a better Belen. A harmonious bonding of the different cultures is well illustrated here in Belen---how Americans can get together and understand and appreciate each others heritage and ways of life.

The Belen area and the Rio Grande Valley has deep pockets of Spanish culture which survives to this day. There are many hispanic families which dominate to a great extent the present character and culture of Belen. As represented by the survivors of the original Spanish families that settled this area. These families preserve close knit family ties, the ties with the church, the life that goes on around the closely knit family who get together at the matanza, the birthdays, the church events, the weddings, and funerals as a way of life. We know that, for example, the dichos or the proverbs survived in this date and that many of the local people use the proverbs to express themselves in the Hispanic home life. We have the remedios or the medicine that the Spanish brought here and have preserved together with the Indian medicines which were provided from natures products--herbs, plants, and mineral matters. They cured themselves using natural medicines because as we know there were no doctors or pharmacies in the early community life. This history of Belen is well illustrated today in the home and you do not have to dig to deep to realize that it is a living culture and that this is what makes Belen different from other communities around the United States.

The history of Belen may be divided into two economic periods. The period before the coming of the railroad and the coming of the railroad in 1880. Mr. Jose Dolores Cordova an old timer now deceased from Jarales told me that before the railroad arrived at Belen there was no money, no currency, everything was bartered. If you wanted to buy a cow, you could trade so many ristras of chili, corn or products of the soil, but there was no money currency. After the railroad came to Belen there was currency in circulation for the first time. The railroad paid its employees with U.S. currency and soon those dollars began to show up in the local stores and circulate around. The community of Belen began to prosper and grow as one of the leading thriving towns in New Mexico.

Modern Belen was incorporated in the year 1918 which was historically the time of World War I. It has continued to grow and to spread as a community until today we have approximately 9,000 inhabitants living in Belen proper. The railroad still plays an important part in the economic life of Belen, and it is also called the Hub City because the Santa Fe Railroad runs through Belen going east and west, north and south---the four points of the compass. This means a great deal to the community because the Santa Fe Railroad is a sizeable employer with a substantial payroll. In addition to that, Belen has continued to attract small industry which has been brought about by the Chamber of Commerce, Valencia County Economic Development Committee and local community leaders, including the local city government and this has given it quite a boost. Belen is also fortunate in a way that it is close by to Albuquerque, only thirty miles away, and the new Interstate-25 highway affords excellent transportation to those who commute to Albuquerque to their jobs. Belen has been called the bedroom of Albuquerque, the largest metropolis in New Mexico, because of the many commuters that travel daily from Belen to Albuquerque to their jobs and bring home the payroll, which helps the local economy and the local merchants. Belen has a good educational system and a fine physical accommodation plant.

New industry is developing and the Chamber of Commerce of the Town of Belen has been active, aggressive, enthusiastic and has contributed a great deal to the new growth and the bright outlook for the Town.

East across the Rio Grande, what began as a retirement community called Rio Communities has grown rapidly over two decades to approximately 3,500 people now living there. It represents an all American community with transplants of diverse backgrounds from California to Chicago to New York.

Local color can be found in the small farming communities surrounding Belen, including Pueblitos, Jarales, Casa Colorada and Los Chavez and Tome. The relaxed rural atmosphere of these areas has also made them attractive for continuing residential development.

Belen still retains its historic character today, as well as its cultural and deep rooted traditions. There is an old saying that goes, "Learn the history of your community so that you appreciate its past and better understand its future". If the giants of Hispanic history: Christopher Columbus, who discovered America almost 500 years ago; Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, the first discoverer of New Mexico; Juan de Onate the first colonist of New Mexico who

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established in 1958 the first colony of San Juan de los Caballeros in Northern New Mexico; or Don Diego De Vargas, who lead the new entrada into New Mexico after the 1680 Pueblo Indian revolt---if they were reincarnated today and returned to Belen for the 250th Anniversary, they would probably be amazed how much of the Spanish culture, roots, image and character has been preserved right here in this community as we approach the Quincentennial of the European discovery of the new world. They would also be able to communicate with many of the local residents in the language of Cervantes, the Spanish writer of all times.

In closing I would like to say "VIVA BELEN! ""VIVA the 250th ANNIVERSARY!".

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Belen's 250th Anniversary

CONGRATULATIONS

From

Mayor: Richard E. Aragon

Mayor Pro.Tem: Rudy L. Sachs

Council: Ernest Torres
Suzanne M. Romero
Gilbert Garcia

City Manager: Jose R. Peña

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF and EMPLOYEES OF THE

CITY OF BELEN

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VALENCIA COUNTY CULTURAL PROGRAM

While ideas produced either by careful planning or wonderful spontaneous occurrence may fall by the wayside, ideas which are inspired into being are often driven by determination straight through from abstract beginning to concrete reality. So it was for Dr. Carmen Martin-Lara, who was inspired by her native cultural roots and upbringing in Valencia, Spain, when she moved to New Mexico and began working as a psychologist in Valencia County. She became increasingly stirred with the prospects of developing cultural ties and awareness between the two communities.

The Valencia County Cultural Program was formed in 1988 with the primary mission of establishing a sister communities relationship between the people of Valencia County, New Mexico and Valencia, Spain--a relationship encompassing an educational, business and cultural exchange. Later that year, the Valencia County Commission adopted a Resolution to Establish Valencia County, New Mexico and Valencia, Spain as Sister Communities. In so doing, it recognized that in addition to sharing the same name, the two communities share a link to the past as an important commonality.

Our Valencia, in the area then known as New Spain, was originally established under an "encomienda" extended by Governor Pedro de Peralta in 1610 to Capitan Francisco de Valencia, the Spanish official in charge of the Rio Abajo Settlements until his death, shortly before the Pueblo Indian uprising of 1680. The present day community of Valencia is located on the site where the seventeenth century "hacienda" was built by Capitan Francisco de Valencia.

The Resolution by the County Commission recognized that the Spanish settlers of this area left their permanent imprint by their customs, language, religion, and ways which became an integral part of the rich culture and lifestyle of the Southwestern United States; and

As for the origins of our Spanish "tocayo", Valencia, Spain, is a city well steeped in European history, from its founding about 138 B.C. by a Roman Consul, through Moorish rule followed by the 1094 conquest by El Cid, the champion of the Christian cause and later the reconquest over the Moors by Don Jaime El Conquistador who in 1238 created the kingdom of Valencia.

Modern Valencia, already the third largest city in Spain, is continuing to grow and develop as a leader in industry and export. It is situated in a highly productive agricultural region where the Rio Turia meets the

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Mediterranean Coast and it enjoys wide acclaim for many of its products, including its sweet Valencia oranges exported throughout the world.

On March 11, 1989 the following members of the Valencia County Cultural Committee traveled to Valencia, Spain in an effort to establish a relationship with various members of their community in areas of government, commerce, culture and education: Dr. Carmen Martin-Lara, director; Tibo J. Chavez, Jr., president; Omero Saurez, education chairman; Filomena Baca, cultural and events chairman; Salomon Montano, Valencia County Commissioner; and Ann Booker, travel coordinator. Accompanying and assisting the delegation were Kristine Chavez and Rupert Baca. During the nine days that the group was in Valencia, they were well received by a number of Valencians, including the mayor, Clementina Rodenas Villena; the Chamber of Commerce President; University of Valencia administrators; the directors of a private school, Colegio Maria de Iciar, Maria Begona Rey de Arteaga de Vilar and her family, and many others who were very much interested in furthering the exchange.

With the welcome financial support of area businesses helping to defray travel expense, the student exchange program was begun in the summer of 1989 when four Valencia County youth were hosted for several weeks by families in Valencia, Spain. Deserving of special recognition are Jose Ayats and his wife, Maria Amparo Martin de Ayats and the Francisco Valcarcel family, of Valencia, Spain who were especially enthusiastic hosts and instrumental in initiating a successful interchange. Its popularity is increasing as expected and it has been followed by a number of other student exchanges, both during the academic year and the summer. Those youth who are fortunate enough to have been on the exchange are changed and matured by the horizon broadening experience.

The "Valencianas", a youth group open to any 5 to 17 year old throughout Valencia County, was started in 1989. While learning about Hispanic history, tradition and culture, they participate in parades, fairs and special events. Members dress in the beautiful regional costumes and learn the traditional dances and customs of Valencia, Spain. They have performed for audiences at the Belen Harvey House, Los Lunas Hospital and Training School, at the All Arts Festival.

The new Valencia County flag, was designed by artist and 1990 Belen High School graduate, David Cordova with the assistance of the VCCP to help create a special sense of unity and pride in Valencia County's heritage. The first edition of the flag, which will likely become a

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collector's item, is currently being offered for sale by the Cultural Program in order to raise the funds needed for the purchase of costume materials for the Valencianas.

The flag incorporates features of the seal of Valencia, Spain and the New Mexico state flag. The crimson and gold colors are traced to the royal colors of Queen Isabella who commissioned Christopher Columbus on his voyage leading to the European discovery of the New World. The radiant Zia is the symbol of the Zia Indian Pueblo for the sun. Resting on the Zia's arms are two "L's" which stand for liberty and loyalty.

At the base of the Zia, a bay or laurel branch, the symbol of honor and victory, curves out to the left. A chili ristra, symbol of good taste throughout the Rio Grande Valley, curves to the right.
County residents are invited to join the Cultural Program and Valencianas with plans to carry the Valencia County flag to Spain in 1992 and participate in the Quincentennial Celebration of Christopher Columbus' European discovery of the New World as well as the Fallas Festival in Valencia.

Feliz 250 Aniversario Belen y Muchos Mas!

Written by: Tibo J. Chavez, Jr.
President, VCCP

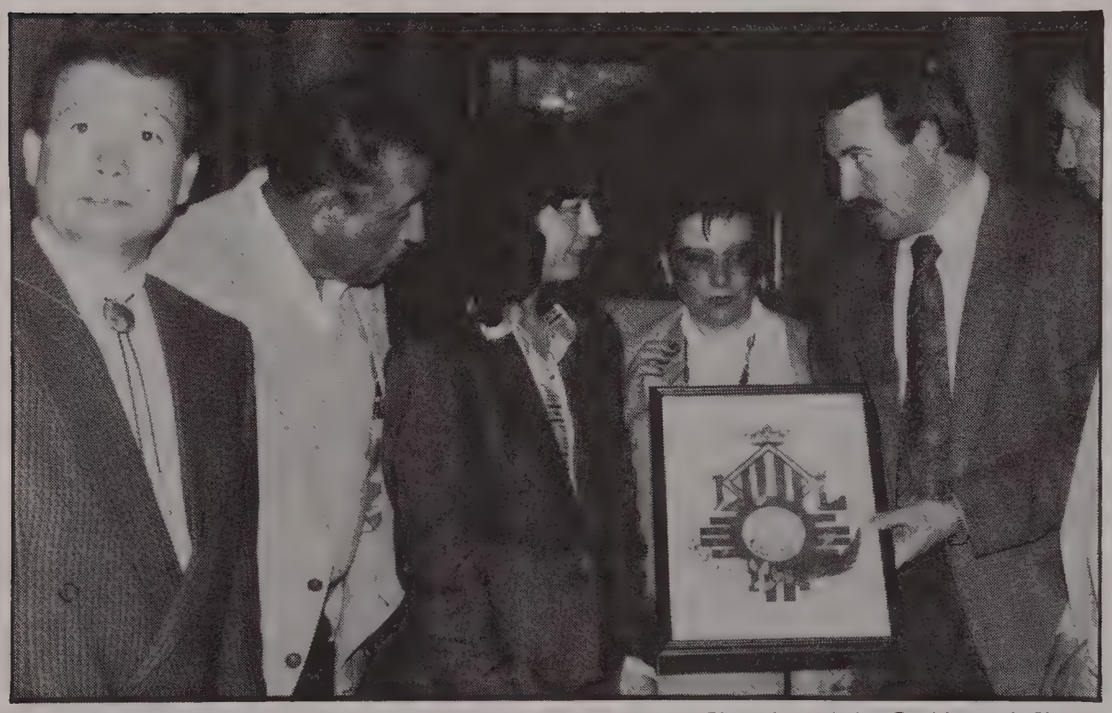

Photo by Kristine Gueldenzoph Chavez

L to R: Omero Saurez, Rupert Baca, Clementina Rodenas i Villena, L'Alcadesa de Valencia, Dr. Carmen Martin-Lara, Tibo J. Chavez, Jr., Salomon Montano

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QUEENS

LAURIE JARAMILLO
Daughter of Alex B. & Frances Jaramillo
Age 17
12th grader at Belen High School

LORETTA LUERAS
Daughter of Gertrude Lueras
Age 10
4th grader at Central Elementary

LAS VALENCIANAS y LOS VALENCIANOS

SASHA MAST
Daughter of Brian & Crystal Williamson
Age 17
12th grader at Belen High School

GINO CHAVEZ
Son of Bernie & Jean Chavez
Age 15
10th grader at Belen High School

JENNIFER TAFOYA
Daughter of Phil & Pauline Tafoya
Age 12
7th grader at Belen Junior High

BRIDGETTE A. HIRSCHFELD
Daughter of Arnold & Diana Luna
Age 11
6th grader at La Merced Elementary

JENNIFER ANDERSON
Daughter of John & Mary Anderson
Age 11
6th grader at Central Elementary

DEBORAH PINO
Age 9
Daughter of Ruth Pino
4th grader at Central Elementary

IRENE MOYA
Age 8
Daughter of Joseph & Sylvia Moya
3rd grader at La Merced Elementary

MICHOLINE MOLINA
Daughter of Isidro & Teresa Molina
Age 14
9th grader at Belen High School

CHRISTOPHER TRUJILLO
Son of Manny & Marcelle Trujillo
Age 12
6th grader at St. Mary's School

SARAH SALAZAR
Daughter of Ernie & Isabel Salazar
Age 9
4th grader at St. Mary's School

CARRIE GURULE
Daughter of David & Esperanza Gurule
Age 17
12 grader at Los Lunas High School

TRISHA GURULE
Daughter of David & Esperanza Gurule
Age 15
11 grader at Los Lunas High School

PAUL GURULE
Son of David & Esperanza Gurule
Age 13
9th grader at Los Lunas High School

LYNDA MARTINEZ
Daughter of Joe & Angela Martinez
Age 12
7th grader at Belen Junior High

NATHANIEL MARTINEZ
Son of Joe & Angela Martinez
Age 13
8th grader at Belen Junior High

JOSEPHINE MOLINA
Age 9
Daughter of Isidro & Teresa Molina
4th grader at St. Mary's School

JENNIFER ATENCIO
Daughter of Alonzo & Lucia Atencio
Age 13
8th grader at Los Lunas Middle School

ANDREA ORTEGA
Daughter of Anthony & Annette Ortega
Age 7
2nd grader at La Merced Elementary

RICK MARES
Son of David & Sherry Carl
Age 18
12th grader at Belen High School

ANDREA SANCHEZ
Daughter of Patrick & Julienne Sanchez
Age 8
3rd grader at Jaramillo School

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ANDREW MOLINA
Son of Isidro & Teresa Molina
Age 6
1st grader at St. Mary's School

DANIEL SANCHEZ
Son of Lucy Sanchez
Age 10
4th grader at St. Mary's School

TIMOTHY CHAVEZ
Son of Bernie & Jean Chavez
Age 13
Belen Junior High School

MARK DEBACA
Son of Ralph & June DeBaca
Age 4
Pre-schooler at Adelino Headstart

JOSEPH CHAVEZ
Son of Tibo Jr. & Kristine Chavez
Age 7
2nd grader Jaramillo Elementary

ANTHONY DEBACA
Son of Ralph & June DeBaca
Age 6
1st grader at La Merced Elementary

LENORE ARAGON
Daughter of Buddy & Eleanor Aragon
Age 20
Junior at U.N.M.

KRISTA BOOKER
Daughter of Larry & Ann Booker
Age 17
12th grader at Belen High School

JUAN DIEGO CHAVEZ
Son of Tibo Jr. & Kristine Chavez
Age 9
4th grader at Central Elementary

NICOLAS CHAVEZ
Son of Tibo Jr. & Kristine Chavez
Age 5
Kindergartner at Jaramillo Elementary

STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

MARISOL PADILLA
Daughter of Fabian & Elizabeth Padilla
Age 17
12 grader at Los Lunas High School

TRISHA GURULE
Daughter of David & Esperanza Gurule
Age 15
11th grader at Los Lunas High School

CARRIE GURULE
Daughter of David & Esperanza Gurule
Age 17
12th grader at Los Lunas High School

LUANNE JUARROS
Daughter of Louis & Nora Juarros
Age 15
11th grader at Los Lunas High School

GUESTS OF HONOR - VALENCIA, SPAIN

VIRGINIA VALCARCEL

IGNACIO "NACHO" FORNES AYATS

BEATRICE FORNES AYATS

DANIEL JOVANI DIOS

MARI CARMEN AYATS GIMENO

MARIA AMPARO MARTIN LARA

ALEX VALCARCEL

ROBERT FORNES AYATS

JOSE DANIEL FLORS MOLINES

JOSE FORNES LANCHIS

JOSE AYATS GIMENO

PUBLICITY COORDINATOR

ROBERT J. CHAVEZ
Son of Leo & Marcella Chavez
Age 18
Freshman at E.N.M.U.

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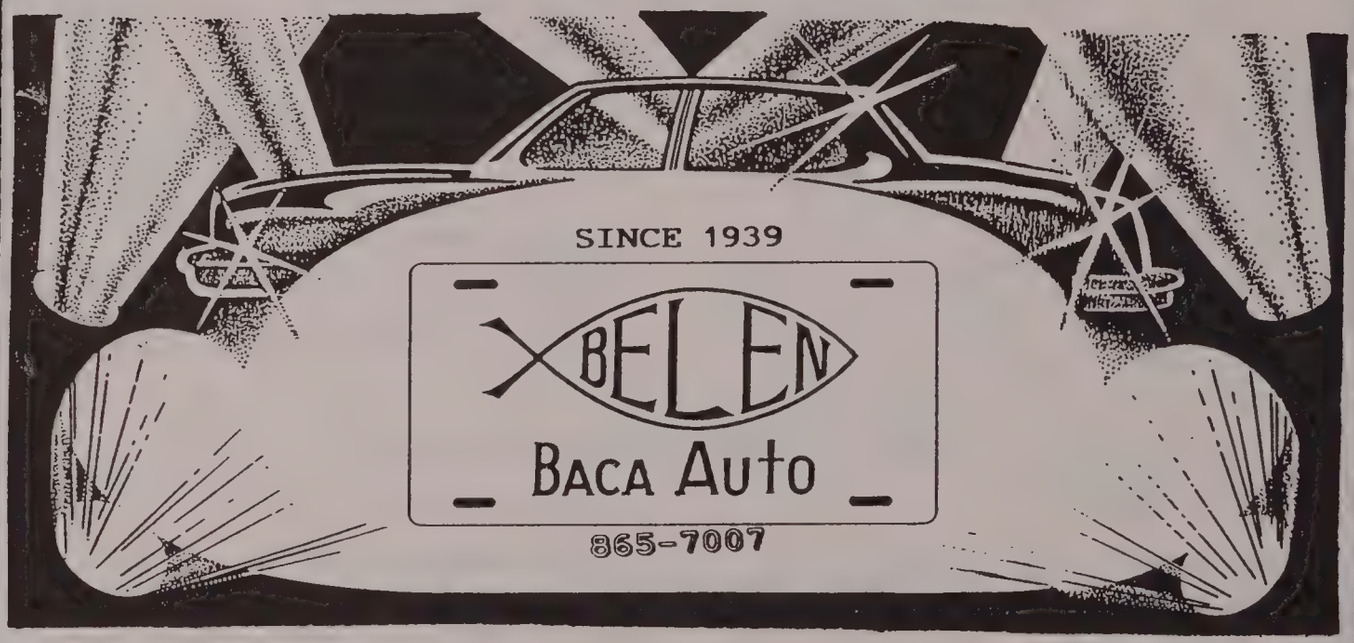

MACEDONIO C. BACA
ANGELINA ORONA
LEROY O. BACA
RHONA BACA ESPINOZA
RYAN
RAGON
RACHEL
(RUDY M. ESPINOZA)
ANDREW L. BACA
(CELINA I. TRUJILLO BACA)
PAUL A. BACA
(LORETTA A. GOMEZ BACA)
PILAR SACHS
PERIFILIA CHAVEZ
SYLVIA SACHS

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of Eighth Graders

in the Computer Room

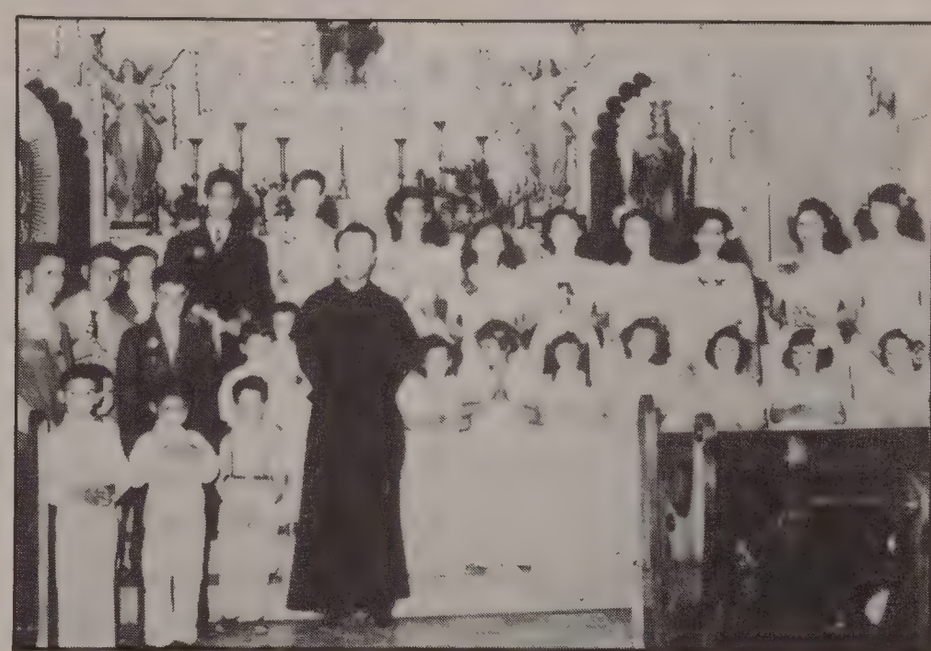
and of its 62 years ofAlumni!

Pictured to the right is

St. Mary's 8th Grade Graduating

& First Communion

Classes of 1947



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Tenth and Church Belen

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Dear God of Enchantment,

- We sing praise to your glorious name for the marvelous gifts of your creation: sun, sky, mountains.

- We thank you for our ancestors who reverenced your land.

- On our two-hundred and fiftieth Anniversary of founding - We ask your continued blessings on our City, Belen. May Belen be for all men, women, children - A House of Bread nourishing all her citizens.

God of Enchantment may your Name
Always be blessed!

Amen

Fr. Martin Jenco

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Mary Montero
Sales Representative

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For the Love of Anna Becker

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Our children gather in her Park
Embraced by tall, elegant elms,
As if in her old-fashioned arms
Strong enough to hold two cultures
Besides Her native Deutschland.
The singing today
Celebrates Cinco de Mayo
All familiar tunes of the Belenites
She adopted so long ago...

Her spouse, John, fled Hanover
Scorning the fierce Prussian helmets.
Preferring to chart his uncertain trade
In this unknown part of the West.
Apprenticed to "Uncle Huning" for 35 cents a day.
John's business talent was noticed ---
El Millionairio smiled and financed
The new Becker mercantile store.

One bright day in November of 1877,
John's German sweetheart came from Milwaukee
To wed him amidst Lutheran hymns
And hopes for the merchant ran high.
Anna Vielstich Becker settled down
In a wagon-town of dirt-packed streets
To raise their half-dozen children:
Hans, Louie, Anna, Gustav, Lucie and Bernard.

Homemaking on the Frontier
Challenged Anna's immigrant ways...
From their Becker Mill she used flour
First for spaegels and apple strudel,
Then she tried some tortillas.
Admonished young sister, Johanna,
Recent bride of her brother-in-law,
To ration with care
Those German steel needles and pins!
Begged John to please send sewing items
Down that old Santa Fe Trail.

She chatted in German to Johanna,
From her German prayers she found strength.
Gossiped in her native tongue with other Lutheran ladies.
In public, this well-bred lady spoke Spanish and English, too.
Anchoring her immigrant family amidst Spanish and English tongues,
Holding fast their Lutheran faith, while learning New Mexican ways.
Here she educated her children, far from the Eastern schools,
With John, founded "Becker" grade school in the Lutheran Church on Main.

Heard the peoples' plight in Tome from the Flood of '84,
Quickly she and John sent flour north
To feed Father Raillierre's flock.
While John built up his Mill, expanded the Mercantile
Founded Belen's First National Bank and opened a Post Office branch,
Anna turned to church and social needs
Her family boosted Belen with a series of Clubs
From the Heyday to the Commercial Club.

After the turn of the century John Becker took the lead
Promoting the Belen Railroad cut-off to the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe.
Then in 1912 as a delegate to our New State's Constitutional Convention

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He ably represented our growing town, thriving Railroad Hub.

Finally, Anna's six children scattered:
Two girls to Illinois high schools,
The sons to colleges in Albuquerque, Colorado, Wisconsin...
Son, Louis, returned to manage John's First National Bank of Belen
But wherever they lived, Anna's offspring followed her legacy:
Always generous, giving time and money for worthy, civic causes.
Culture, grace, wisdom and love
Were rooted in her children, blossomed in her friends.

Here in the shady Park, we remember her still:
Like a transplanted tree she has nurtured our town,
The Immigrant Mother, Anna Becker,
She embraces our young ones at play.

****

This is a picture of Lucie and Anita Becker, daughters of John Becker, and a friend in 1897 bicycling in Belen. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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CONGRATULATIONS BELEN ON YOUR 250TH ANNIVERSARY

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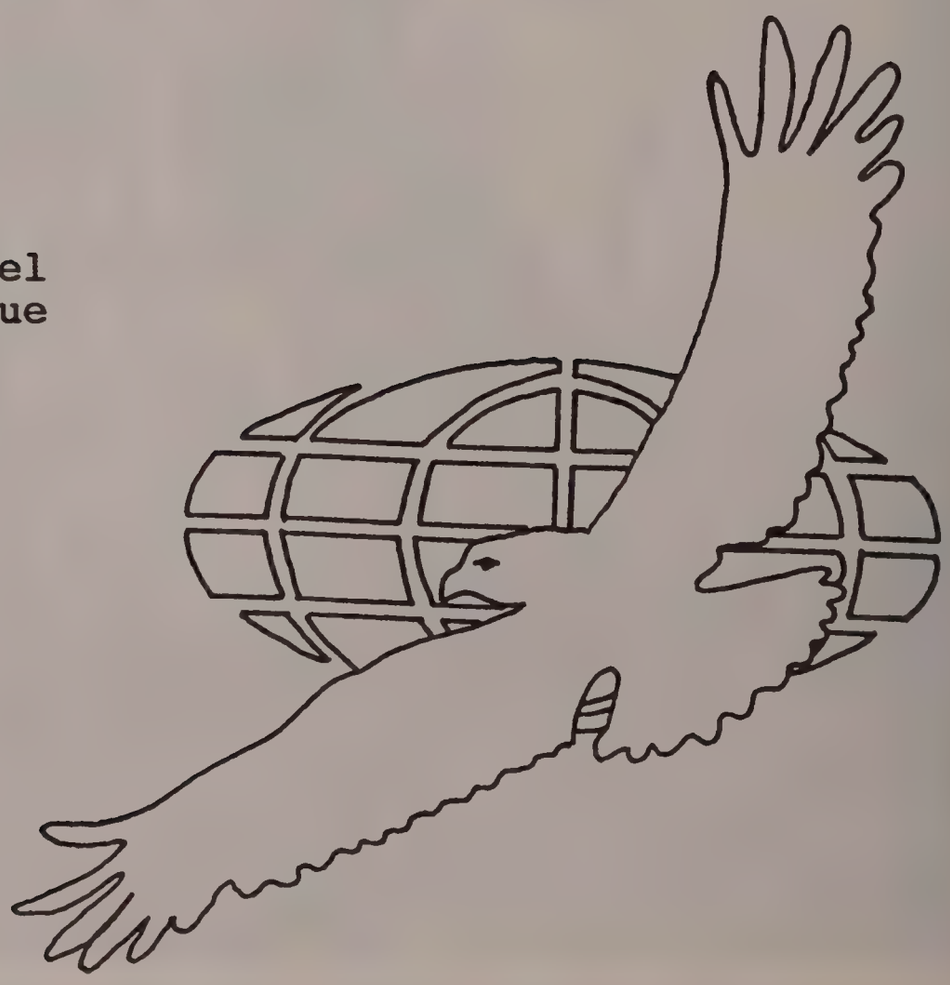

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This is the Belen Baseball Team (with the B's on their caps) playing the Albuquerque Greys in 1925. Peanuts Adair at the left was the team manager and Jack Jones was the bat boy sitting on the ground. In the first row the Belen team members were Slick Alford, Alexander, Hunter, R. Collins, Whiteneck, Desmond and R. Garcia. Often, when "ringers" were brought to Belen, employment would be found for them at either the John Becker Co. or the railroad. Mr. Alexander, in the picture, was one of these "ringers" who found work at Becker's. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

The Pino Gang from Bosque had been robbing freight trains on the Santa Fe line. These are the scouts for the Posse searching for the gang. The picture, taken behind the First National Bank (where the present Sandia Savings is located), was taken about 1918. The gang was caught south of Belen with several gang members being shot and killed. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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GRAVEDIGGER
TINY GARCIA
+ 1949 - ? +

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Early Los Lunas History

(1540-1912)

The Village of Los Lunas is located beside the Rio Grande approximately twenty miles south of the metropolitan city of Albuquerque. Due to a population boom these past 12 years, this sleepy little village has begun to spread its wings to the west mesa as well as to the incorporation of the small areas to the north, previously known as Los Lentes, to the small settlement to the south, known as Chihuahuita and most recently to the east across the Rio Grande incorporating a small segment of the historical town of Valencia.

Very early recorded history of the area begins with Coronado's march through the southwest in the 1540's which historians believe followed the Rio Grande. Early reports of five settlements of Indian Pueblos were encountered in the present day Isleta Indian Reservation area.

The southernmost pueblo on the west side of the Rio Grande which belonged to the Isletans was then called by the Tigua name of Berkwintoi (Rainbow Village). This settlement is now known as Los Lentes and is the northern most boundary of the Village of Los Lunas.

There may have been other pueblos in a previous era. Residents of the new developments on the west mesa of Los Lunas are discovering shards of potter while building and landscaping their new home. Boleslo Romero, one of the new residents has a container in his patio where he tosses all the potter shards he is finding while landscaping his back yard.

The next documentation of the area begins in a later period after the Onate Entrada when the early Spanish pioneers begin to spread throughout the Rio Grande valley. A small settlement, which was called San Clemente was located about 500 yards south of the present day capilla (chapel) of San Antonio in Los Lentes. The settlement consisted of a few families who had settled near the Indian village of Berkwintoi (the Rainbow Village of the Isleta's.)

Our village is an old village and it's history is intertwined with the early history of the Spanish occupation. During the rebellion of 1680 in which the Pueblo Indians killed or drove most of the Spaniards (with the exception of a few young women and children who were made captives), out of Nueva Espana. The survivors from the pueblo of San Clemente fled south with other Hispanic survivors from the northern villages of Nueva Espana taking many of the Isleta Indians with them to present day, El Paso. The Isletas who fled south would remain to found the town named Ysleta del Sur.

It is written that the agreement had been with the settlers that if they remained in El Paso until the reconquista was accomplished, that those who returned to the north to repopulate Nueva Espana were to be given land grants on lands which they or their families had previously occupied.

Among the survivors was a woman by the name of Ana de Sandoval y Manzanares, a widow of Blas de la Candelaria who had grown children. A fanciful storey is written about Dona Ana Sandoval de Manzanares who claimed the tract of land of San Clemente because of her prior residence in the area with her father prior to the 1680 rebellion. Her claim was denied by the government in Nueva Espana. Dona Ana, however, was not a lady to be thwarted. She hired two men for protection to accompany her while she journeyed with a caravan down the El Camino Real to Mexico City to press her claim with authorities of the crown. Dona Ana was gone two years, but upon her return she had the documents needed to petition for the San Clemente Land Grant. It is not known exactly how many varas or

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acres the original grant contained.

In the City of Santa Fe, Dona Ana de Sandoval y Manzanares was granted the San Clemente Land Grant on the 23rd of July 1716. Her son, Felix de la Candelaria, in the name of his mother went through the accustomed ceremonies that the law prescribed for the rights of possession.

The San Clemente Land Grant was surveyed by the U.S. Land Grant Court Claims more than 150 years later during the 1890's. The bulk of the grant was still intact and consisted of 89,000 acres.

Upon the death of Dona Ana, several of her heirs sold some small parcels of the land. The largest portion of the San Clemente Land Grand was sold to Don Domingo de Luna.

The Hispanic pioneers in Los Lunas undoubtedly learned many survival techniques from their neighbors in the north (Isleta). Acquiring the land was one thing, keeping it was another.

Nomadic Indians were constantly marauding in the area. By the middle of the 1700's these Indians had acquired horses. The Comanche, the Apache and the Navajo all had their turns raiding Los Lunas for sheep, horses and the crops which were raised here. Indian raids in our history are well documented from the late 1700's through the late 1800's well after New Mexico had become a territory of the United States.

A document at the New Mexico archives shows that a legal suit was brought against Don Domingo de Luna, for staying in bed rather than doing his duty in joining a party of his neighbors who were chasing the Indians. Proceedings were initiated against Don Domingo on July 4 and August 31, 1768 for the disobedience to the Alcalde Mayor Francisco Trebol Navarro, for refusing to go on a campaign against the Indians, pretending to be ill. Don Domingo was fined 100 pesos.

His eldest son, Antonio de Luna, was killed by the Indians on June 9, 1779. By the 1800's Los Lunas was dominated by the Luna and Romero families on the west side of the Rio Grande. Arranged marriages were the custom of the day, and these families tended to marry within their own extended families. On the east side of the Rio Grande in Peralta were their friendly neighbors, the Oteros and to the South was Belen and the Baca family. Later, several of the marriages alliances were with these family lines.

During the 1850's the Lunas, Romeros and Jaramillos who were all interrelated and other sons of the "ricos" journeyed to St. Louis and the East for their educations. The private coach used by the Luna boys was a large one drawn by four strong mules and accompanied by about one hundred armed men as far as the boat on the Missouri River in Kansas. The carriage seats were pulled out at night to form a bed similar to a modern pullman car. The primary reason for education in the East was acquiring proficiency in the English language. This would prove to be beneficial as the Los Lunas became quite prominent in Territorial politics.

Several of the above families were involved in various land grants. However, owning large portions of land would not necessarily mean ready "dollars" in the currency of the United States. The Hispanic of this region were primarily sheep men owning huge flocks of sheep consisting of thousands of sheep. The price of sheep in 1827 during the Mexican Period had fallen to 50 cents each. The American occupation of 1846 raised that price but it was not until 1849 when gold was discovered in California that the Hispanics were really able to profit from the sheep business. Miguel A. Otero and Antonio J. Luna were pioneers blazing the trail to California with over 25,000 sheep. Their route was later followed by the Santa Fe Railway. Otero and Luna disposed of the sheep at $10 to $25 a head in San Francisco, California.

Many people do not realize that the "gold rush of the 49" brought 300 people from all over the world into California for every one of the residents that had been there previously. This population boom occurred during the short period of three years.

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California was in desperate need of food and the California missions, also owners of huge sheep flocks were unable to cope with the demand to supply all the newly arrived "49'ers".

James A. Hubbel from Albuquerque left a memo for 1856 which lists an unknown number of flock masters with a total of 105,000 sheep. Joaquin Perea owned 22,000, Antonio Jose Luna, 17,000, Jaramillo of Los Lunas, 17,000, Antonio Jose Otero, 11,000, Rafael Luna, 10,000, Torribio Romero, 9,000, Ramon Luna, 7,000 and several others owned a total of 12,000. At least five of the sheep owners mentioned were from Los Lunas owning a total of over 60,000 sheep where were taken to California on the 1856 sheep drive.

Indian troubles continued to plague the territory and Los Lunas was no exception. In 1852 it was decided by Col. Sumner that a Post would be established in Los Lunas. This post was in Los Lunas from 1852 to 1862. It was never intended to be a permanent post. Capt. Richard S. Ewell, in command of the Company G. 1st Dragoons, was the only commissioned officer present for duty most of the time. The company would usually number about 84 men.

In early summer of 1862 the men and the post were moved across the river to Peralta. The following year the old Los Lunas post was once again used for the last time, the post returns were signed by Col. Kit Carson. This was the place of the gathering of men from throughout the territory which were needed to ride out in search of the Navajos for the purpose of the destruction of the Navajo nation.

On July 7, 1863, Kit Carson and 221 men left Los Lunas and headed west towards Navajo country. This was just a portion of Carson's command which eventually numbered 736 men.

The 1860's was the era when the Germans came to town. Franz, Sachs, Hunings, Raffs, Spears, Sichlers and others whole decedents still live in the area. The current Mayor of Los Lunas, Louis Huning is the decedent of one of the first German immigrants who was also named Louis Huning. Louis came with $20.00 in his pocket and amassed a fortune before he died at the turn of the century in the mercantile trade. He and his brother (L & H Huning) owned six branch houses that handled many of hundreds of thousands of dollars in goods. Many years they had contracts from the government in the amount of $150,000 annually. In addition, Louis and his brother started stock raising and they had 60,000 head of sheep and 8,000 head of cattle.

Members of the old Hispanic families, the Lunas, Romeros and the Jaramillos went into the freighting business after the sheep business to California was no longer profitable. They freighted to St. Louis, Colorado, Arizona and down into Mexico. Many of the residents of Los Lunas and the surrounding areas can trace family histories to grandfathers who worked on these freight trains.

In November of 1863 a large expedition left the territory to Arizona with two companies of dragons and one hundred wagons of freight belonging to the Aguirres of Mesilla and the Romeros and Don Jesus Luna of Los Lunas. The expedition also drove five hundred steers. They accompanied the civil officials of the new territory of Arizona, Governor, Secretary, Surveyor General, Treasurer, District Attorney and the Judges of the Supreme Court to Arizona.

In 1875 the courthouse was moved by the Luna family from Tome to Los Lunas. The Lunas had become very influential in Territorial politics. With this act, Los Lunas became the county seat for Valencia County.

Solomon Luna, a representative from Valencia County introduced legislation that no county seat could be moved unless it was moved more than twenty miles from its present location. This legislation is still in effect. The rival, ten miles south, Belen, it was rumored wanted the distinction of being the county seat of Valencia County and this legislation would prevent the county seat from being located in Belen or being returned to Tome.

Freighting days ended with the coming of the railroad. The depot in Los Lunas was constructed in 1879 facilitating the movement

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of livestock, hay and supplies.

The Luna Mansion was built in this time period due to an agreement between the Luna family and the Railroad who wanted to acquire property right of way on land belonging to the Lunas. The first residents of the mansion were Tranquilino Luna and his wife, Amalia Jaramillo y Romero. Tranquilino Luna was a U.S. Territorial Representative to Congress. Don Tranquilino died in the early 1890's. The only son of Tranquilino and Amalia was Maximiliano Luna, one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders in the Spanish American War. Maximiliano died during the Spanish American War in the Philippines. A memorial bust of Maximiliano Luna is in the rotunda of the State Capitol Building in Santa Fe. Luna Vocational and Technical School in Las Vegas was named for this young man.

Los Lunas was at the turn of the century a western town with hitching posts, saloons, gambling halls, hotels and boarding houses. Los Lunas has the distinction of having the first bridge build across the Rio Grande on the old Coast to Coast Highway.

During the Territorial Congress of 1912 in which New Mexico became a state, one of the most influential participants was Solomon Luna. Don Solomon and his wife Adaliada Otero did not have any children. Solomon Luna, the last of his direct line died during 1913 mysteriously in a sheep vat while visiting one of his many ranches. Don Solomon Luna had been a legend in his own time. The era of the Luna family passed into History.

The San Clemente Land Grant was inherited by his nephew, Eduardo Otero, son of his sister, Eloisa Luna. A few years later, Mrs. Solomon Luna (the former Adeliada Otero) moved to California where the family also had properties. Eduardo Otero and his family moved into the Luna Mansion. The Otero family sold the grant to the Huning family, and the Huning Trust is now in control of the San Clemente Land Grant.

Excerpts of Early History of Los Lunas from a book in progress about the "The History of Los Lunas" by Pauline Jaramillo

This is the interior of the Oscar Goebel store located where David's Mens Wear is today. Goebel, a German immigrant, arrived in Belen in 1877 and began working in Belen for Louis Huning of Los Lunas. He eventually opened a store which featured a curio section and a small hotel. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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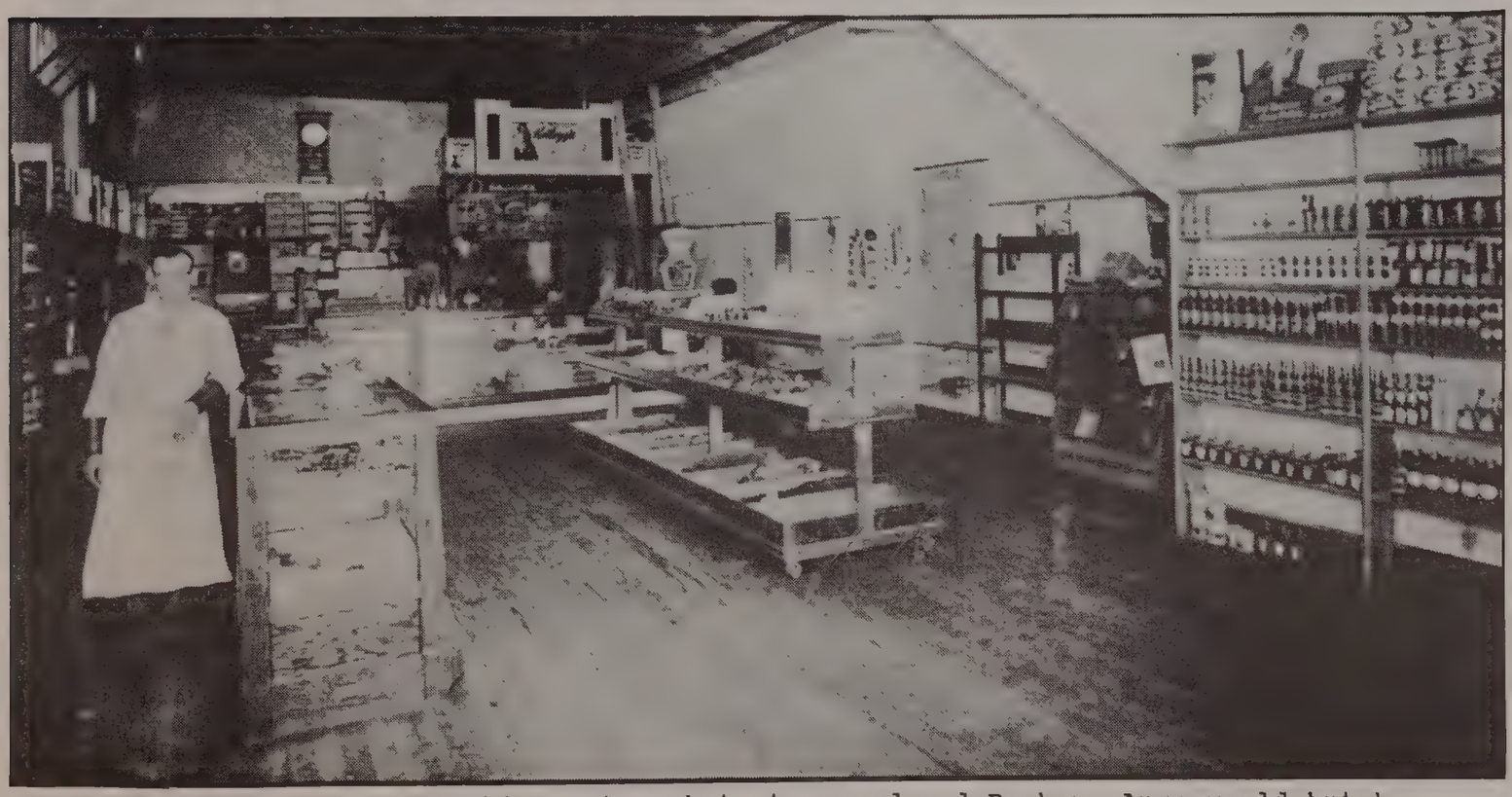
John Becker's Flour Mill was built in 1884 on the site of the former First National Bank. The mill was run by steam which was produced in the engine room at the far left of the picture. The section, to the left of the mill with the ramp, was the wool warehouse where John Becker stored the wool he bought. The wool was brought in wagons to be weighed on a scale on the platform in front of the mill and then stored in the warehouse. The section of the building to the south was the hide warehouse where Becker stored animal hides that had been purchased from area hunters.Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.



Harry Auge in his meat market at second and Becker. Auge would butcher each morning, while his wife, Pearl, tended the market cutting what ever piece of meat the customer needed. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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Our Lady of Belen Catholic Church background and Felipe Chavez Mausoleum at left.

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This is a picture of the Belen Fiestas in 1916 taken from the balcony of the John Becker Store (the present site of the new First National Bank Building). The Fiesta was traditionally held in front of the store with gambling games being played on the porch of the store. Melons would be sold in the smaller tents and from the back of wagons by local farmers. "Carpas", or tent dances, would be held under the large tent. Behind the large tent is the Cut-Off Saloon. The two story building is Central Grade School. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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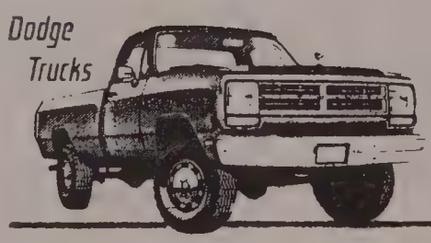

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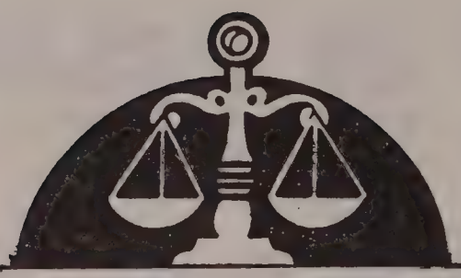

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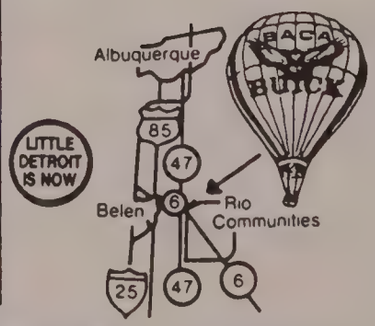

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Romancito Castillo was an early Belen motorcyclist enthusiast. He is shown here with his "Indian" motorcycle and "Indian" shirt. Castillo lived on south Main St. and was eventually killed in a motorcycle accident. This picture was taken about 1917. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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Juan Rey Baca's mercantile store was located in Bacaville on south Main in Belen. The building was built in the late 1880's or 1890's. Later the building was used as a dance hall. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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BELEN AND THE SANTA FE PACIFIC

BY SANDY SCHAUER

FOR SOME PEOPLE THE SANTA FE RAILROAD AND BELEN ARE SYNONYMOUS. AND SINCE THE BELEN CUT OFF WAS COMPLETED IN 1908. THE SANTA FE PACIFIC, AS THE COMPANY IS NOW KNOWN, HAS PROVIDED A LIVING FOR MANY RESIDENTS OF BELEN AREA.

IT WAS THE SUMMER OF 1880 WHEN THE SANTA FE RAILROAD FIRST REACHED BELEN. THE RAILWAY CAME INTO NEW MEXICO FROM COLORADO, PROCEEDING SOUTH THROUGH RATON, LAS VEGAS, GLORIETTA AND BERNALILLO BEFORE ARRIVING IN ALBUQUERQUE IN APRIL, 1880. FROM ALBUQUERQUE , THE SANTA FE AIMED FOR EL PASO WHICH IT REACHED IN JULY, 1881 AFTER PASSING THROUGH BELEN. WITHIN A FEW YEARS OF REACHING EL PASO, THE SANTA FE REACHED CALIFORNIA AND BY 1886 SERVICE WAS OFFERED FROM CHICAGO TO THE PACIFIC COAST.

DURING THE FIRST YEARS OF THE 20TH CENTURY, OFFICIALS AT THE SANTA FE DECIDED THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS AN ALL-WEATHER, LOW-GRADE ROUTE BETWEEN ALBUQUERQUE AND KANSAS WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF TRAINS FROM THE EAST AND WEST. AS IT WAS ENVISIONED THE NEW MEXICO PORTION OF THE ROUTE WOULD RUN TO TEXICO FROM BELEN VIA ABO PASS AND FORT SUMNER, A DISTANCE OF SOME 260 MILES. THE DISTANCE TO CHICAGO WOULD BE ALMOST EXACTLY THE SAME ON THE NEW ROUTE AS IT WAS ON THE OLD, SOME 1,580 MILES. BUT THE NEW ROUTE TO AMARILLO, VIA TEXICO, WHICH BECAME KNOWN AS THE BELEN CUT OFF, WOULD SAVE TIME BECAUSE THE GRADES WERE NOT AS STEEP AS THOSE IN THE ROUTE OVER RATON PASS.

EARLY IN 1903 , A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WAS AWARDED TO B.LANTRY & SON, A WELL KNOWN CONSTRUCTION FIRM WITH HEADQUARTERS IN STRONG CITY, KANSAS. ALMOST AT ONCE A LARGE FORCE OF MEN WAS DISPATCHED TO BEGIN WORK AT ABO PASS, SOUTHEAST OF BELEN, THE MOST STRATEGIC POINT AND THE LOCATION OF THE MOST DIFFICULT WORK ON THE NEW LINE.

BELEN SOON BECAME A LIVELY SPOT. BY THE END OF JANUARY 1803. TRACKS WERE LAID ALMOST TO THE RIO GRANDE AND A TEMPORARY PILE BRIDGE WAS SOON THROWN ACROSS THE RIVER TO FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF SUPPLIES TO THE GRADERS' CAMPS, THE MOST IMPORTANT BEING AT ABO PASS WHERE THE ROCK WORK AND GRADING WERE BEING "PUSHED." TO SUPPLY THE WANTS OF THE WORKERS, 75 FREIGHT TEAMS WERE CONSTANTLY ON THE ROAD FROM BELEN TO THE FIVE CAMPS. AT BELEN, THE LIMITED SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS WERE SOON EXHAUSTED. EVEN THE FLOOR OF THE RAILROAD STATION WAS REQUISITIONED EVERY NIGHT BY SNORING, BLANKETED FIGURES WHILE, ALONG THE GRADE, NUMEROUS CAMPFIRES WERE SURROUNDED BY MEN SEEKING WORK.

THE "RICH MAN'S PANIC," A MINOR DEPRESSION, HALTED CONSTRUCTION IN JULY, 1803. NOT UNTIL AUGUST, 1805, WERE TOOLS TAKEN UP AGAIN BY AREA RESIDENTS AND OTHERS. IN JANUARY, 1806, THERE WERE 300 MEN AT WORK ON THE WESTERN END OF THE PROJECT. IN TOTAL THE COMPLETED PROJECT

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INVOLVED 278 MILES OF WHICH 249 WERE BETWEEN BELEN AND TEXICO.

EVEN THOUGH THE LINE WAS NOT FULLY COMPLETED, TRAINS OPERATED OVER THE NEW TRACKS WHEN THE FIRST TIMETABLE WENT INTO EFFECT ON DECEMBER 18, 1907. AT THAT TIME THERE WAS ANOTHER MINOR DEPRESSION AND WORK WAS TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED IN FEBRUARY.1908 SO THAT WHEN THE LINE WAS TURNED OVER TO THE OPERATING DEPARTMENT ON JULY 1, 1908, THERE WAS STILL FENCING AND BALLASTING TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

AS PART OF THE THROUGH LINE, THERE WERE OTHER CHANGES MADE. WEST FROM BELEN, A 19 MILE CONNECTION WAS BUILT TO DALIES AND RIO PUERCO. BUILT TO AVOID HEAVY GRADES, THE NEW LINE ACCOMPLISHED ITS PURPOSE. THE HEAVIEST GRADE WAS THE 1-1/4% CLIMB FROM BELEN TO ABO PASS (WESTBOUND THE GRADE WAS ONLY 6/10TH OF 1%). EVENTUALLY TRANSCONTINENTAL PASSENGER TRAINS WERE USING THE BELEN CUTOFF. EARLY TRAINS INCLUDED THE SCOUT AND THE MISSIONARY WHILE LATER SCHEDULES LISTED THE SAN FRANCISCO CHIEF.

BELEN'S NICKNAME. THE HUB CITY, IS A RESULT OF THE CREATION OF THE BELEN CUTOFF. WITH THE NEW RAIL ROUTE, BELEN SERVED AS A HUB FOR TRAINS.

AS THE YEARS PASSED BELEN GREW WITH THE RAILROAD. IN 1943-44 CENTRALIZED TRAFFIC CONTROL WAS INSTALLED BY THE SANTA FE WHILE IN 1944 THE ROUNDHOUSES IN BELEN AND CLOVIS WERE EXTENDED TO ACCOMMODATE LARGER LOCOMOTIVES.

IN 1967 THE SANTA FE EMPLOYED AN AVERAGE OF 600 PEOPLE IN THE HUB CITY WITH A PAYROLL OF $25,000 PER DAY. ONE OF THE SPECIAL FEATURES AT THAT TIME WAS AN ELECTRONIC SCALE WHICH AUTOMATICALLY WEIGHED FREIGHT CARS IN MOTION. CUSTOM DESIGNED FOR THE SANTA FE, THE SMALL FIXED PROGRAM COMPUTER DETERMINED THE WEIGHT OF THE CAR ON A SCALE. AS A CAR PASSED OVER A 20 FOOT SECTION OF TRACK WHERE THE SCALE WAS INSTALLED, A PROXIMITY SWITCH PUT THE INSTRUMENT IN MOTION.

AMONG THE PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN BELEN IN 1967 WERE YARDMASTERS, BRAKEMASTERS, SUPERVISORS, THE CREW OF THE ROUNDHOUSE, CASHIER, CHIEF CLERK, COMMUNICATIONS AND TICKET CLERKS AND THE TRAIN CREWS.

THE LAST SCHEDULED PASSENGER TRAIN CAME THROUGH BELEN IN THE LATE 1960'S.

IN 1980 THE SANTA FE EMPLOYED ABOUT 580 PEOPLE IN BELEN CONSISTING MAINLY OF TRAIN OPERATING, MECHANICAL AND FREIGHT OFFICE PERSONNEL. MANY OF THE FREIGHT TRAINS COMING INTO BELEN IN 1980 WERE DESTINED FOR THE GULF. EAST AND WEST COASTS AND THE SANTA FE PERSONNEL IN BELEN WERE IN CHARGE OF CLASSIFYING THE FREIGHT CARS INTO TRAINS THAT WOULD MOVE THE FREIGHT MOST EFFICIENTLY.

CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED IN BELEN AND FOR THE SANTA FE PACIFIC OVER THE LAST 100 YEARS. YET EVEN IN 1980, THE RAILROAD IS LOCATED IN THE HUB OF THE CITY AND CONTINUES TO HELP PROVIDE STABILITY FOR THE COMMUNITY.

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This is the Santa Fe Railroad Machinist Crew in Belen in 1911. R.H. Brooks, the foreman, is at the far right and Fidel Delgado is a machinist in the front row, fourth from the right. Do you recognize anyone else? Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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waiting to be peeled.
Who will eat this orange?
Who will spit out your soft seeds
mindless of the season?
On rock or sand?
In water or dark soil?
Valencia, I have watched your shepherds
guide lonely herds to even lonelier spaces
precisely at noon or under the half moon,
sleeping as they dreamed.
Who will marry the shepherd?
Who will bear his sons?
Not the woman with green eyes.
Not the woman in rouge.
And will his wife remain faithful?
Valencia, widow, you are weeping for a past
which neither dreams can nurture nor nights destroy,
and you are old and solemn and your face
beneath a lace veil saddens when the cock crows.
Who will chant your litanies?
Who will sing your albaes?
(The young boy in black will.)
(The orphan at the well.)
(The river when it snows.)

PAUL TRUJILLO

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Angie Lopez
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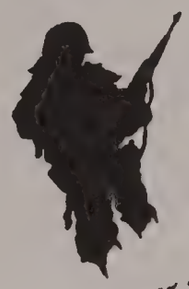
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Sor. Gov.r y Cap.n Gen.l = El Capitan Diego de Jorre, y Ant.o de
Salazar, y los demas q.e abajo firmamos, ante la grandeza de V. S.
con el mayor rend.to devido decimos: que por q.to nos hallamos con
crecidas familias, y no tenemos tras. comodas p.a poderlas mante-
ner, y tener junto un sitio yermo despoblado, y como tal vale-
go en el puesto del Rio-Abajo, le registramos y pedimos de merced
en el Real nombre de S. M. (G.d D. G.) p.a poblarnos en él, habien-
do tras. de labores las q.e fueren comodas p.a ello, y en las q.e no, po-
der tener en que pastar nro. ganados mayores y menores; el q.e ofre-
cemos mantener y poblar, leg.n vale ordenanzas previenen: cuyos
linderos son, p.r la pte. del oriente, la Sierra de Sandia, y
p.r el Poniente el Rio grande: por el Norte, de una y otra banda del
Rio, son lind.os las tras. de Nicolas de Chaves, y la de los vecinos po-
bladores de N. S. de la Concepc.n sitio de Jome; y p.r el Sur, el Para-
je que llaman de Thpe. Romas, y linea recta ira. traspesar con
los lind.os q.e dho expresado de oriente a poniente. Lo que, lim-
do V. S. devido de hacernos la merced q.e pedimos, sin perjui-
cio de tercero q.e pueda tener mejor dro. poblaremos como
dho es; pues p.a todo lo cual, a V. pedimos y suplicamos
rendidam.te sea muy servido de proveher y mandar como lle-
vamos pedido, que en ello recibiremos merced y buena obra. Y
juramos en devida forma q.e este nro. escrito no es de mali-
cia alguna sino p.r socorrer nras. necesidades = Diego de Jorre
= Ant.o de Salazar = Pedro Vigil = Mig.l Salazar = Juana Jere-
sa Romero = Lugarda Romero = Juan Ant.o Salazar = Mig.l Sa-
lazar = Pablo Salazar = Nicolas Salazar = Mart. Ant.o Trujillo = M.a
Jorre = Salvador Jorre = Jose Ant.o Jorre = Judas Jorre = Ca-
yetano = Christoval Jorre = Diego Jorre = Barb.a Romero =
= Gabriel Romero = M.a Vigil = Jose Trujillo = Fran.co Mar-
tin = Nicolas Martiniano = Ygn.o Barrera = Juan Domingo Jorre
= Jose Romero = Jose Genorio = Juan Jose de Sandoval = Fran.co

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BELEN LAND GRANT

To his excellency, the Governor and Captain-General: Captain Diego de Torres and Antonio de Salazar, and the other signers hereto, before the greatness of Your Excellency, with the greatest possible submission, state: That, whereas, we have large families and have no convenient lands wherewith to support them and have no convenient lands wherewith to support them and having examines an uncultivated and vacant tract of land at the point of the Rio Abajo and being unappropriated, we register the same and petition for a grant in the royal name of His Majesty (Whom God may preserve) for the purpose of settling thereon, there being suitable lands for cultivation, and such as are not will answer for pasture grounds for our herds and flocks, which we promise to occupy and settle as required by the Royal Ordinances; the boundaries of which are, on the east by the Sandia Mountains and on the west, the boundary is the lands of Nicolas Chavez and those of the adjoining settlers of Our Lady of Concepcion, tract of Tome; and on the south the place called Phelipe Romero, in a direct line until it intersects the boundaries above mentioned from east to west; which Your Excellency being pleased to grant and provide as we request by doing which we will receive grace and favor, and we swear in due form that this, our petition, is not done in malice but for the purpose of overcoming our difficulties.

Captain Diego de Torres
Antonio de Salazar
Pedro Vigil
Miguel Salazar
Juana Teresa Romero
Lugarda Romero
Juan Antonio Salazar
Miguel Salazar
Pablo Salazar
Nicolas Salazar
Manuel Antonio Trujillo
Maria Torres
Salvador Torres
Jose Antonio Torres
Tadeo Torres
Cayetano Cristobal Torres
Barbara Romero
Gabriel Romero
Maria Vigil
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Juan Jose Sandoval
Francisco Trujillo

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Trujillo = Fran.co Xiron = Christoval Naranjo = Jose Ant.o Naran
jo = B.me Torres = Pedro Romero = Merced Real
En la villa de Sta. Fee. a los quince dias del mes de Ob.e
de mil setec.tos cuarenta, Yo el Th.e Coron.l Gov.r y cap.n Gral. de
este Reyno de la Nueva Mexico D.n Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza, visto
el presente escrito p.r los mencionados en él, devia mandar y mandé
se les diese la merced del sitio q.e piden en nombre del Rey N. S.
(J. D. G.) p.a q.e lo Pueblen, cultiven y beneficien p.a si, sus hijos, he-
rederos, subsesores en q.n mas dro. tengan sin perjuicio de terceros
como lo prometen en su mismo escrito; p.r lo q.e ordeno y man-
do al Alc.e mayor de la villa de Alburq.e D. Nicolas de Chaves le
dé la posesion mencionada con las circunstancias y calidades
q.e en tales casos se requieren; con apercivim.to q.e como no puede
dejar de haver en aquellas imediaciones otras mercedes reales
en que es neces.o q.e a la data y señalam.to de esta nueva merced
se lleven los instrum.tos y papeles de los q.e pudiesen alindar con
esta; p.a q.e con mayor claridad se pueda hacer el reparto de ello
y divisiones, a fin de q.e en lo presente ni en lo futuro se formen
pleitos ni discordias: p.r lo q.e me parece muy conveniente se
observe la forma que se previene. Asi lo provei, mandé y firme
con los testigos de mi asist.a actuando p.r recept.a a falta de es-
crivano R.l q.e no lo hay, y en papel comun p.r no correr otro en
este Reyno = D. Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza = Ant.o de Herrero =
= Jose Ferrer = Queda anotada en mi libro de gov.no
que para en el archivo de esta capital a foxas 68 v.ta = Sta.
Fee y En.o 25 de 1742 = Mendoza = En este Puesto de
N. S. de Belen, Jurisdic.n de la villa de Alburq.e en diez y nueve
dias del mes de Dic.e del año de mil setec.tos cuarenta, Yo el cap.n
D.n Nicolas Duran y Chaves, Alc.e mayor y cap.n a guerra de dha
villa y Jurisdic.n en virtud del auto del Sor. Th.e Coronel D.n
Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza, Gov.r y Cap.n Gral. de este Reyno pronuncia-
do el quince del pp.do Nob.e del mismo año en q.e me manda

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Franco Jiron
Cristoval Naranjo
Jose Antonio Naranjo

Bartolome Torres
Pedro Romero

ROYAL GRANT

In the Town of Santa Fe, on the 15th day of November, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty, I, the Lieutenant Colonel, Governor and Captain General of the Kingdom of New Mexico, Don having seen the present petition made by the persons therein referred to, should order, and did order, that a grant be made to them of the tract they ask for, in the name of the King, Our Sovereign, (whom God may preserve) in order that they may settle, cultivate and improve the same for the benefit of themselves, their children, heirs and successors, who may have a better right thereto, without injury to any third party as they promise in their petition. Therefore, I order and direct the Senior Justice of the Town of Albuquerque, Don Nicolas de Chavez, to give them the possession referred to, under the conditions and terms required in such cases; and, there being no doubt of the existence of other royal grants in the vicinity and the deed and title of these who adjoin said lands are required to be presented for the fulfillment of this new grant in order that it may be divided with more propriety for the purpose of avoiding suits and difficulties at the present time as well as in the future, I deem it proper to conform to the forms which are provided. I have so provided, ordered and signed, with my attending witnesses acting by appointment in the absence of a notary, there being none in this kingdom.

DON GASPAR DOMINGO DE MENDOZA

Antonio de Herrera
Jose Terrus

It is noted in my book of government on file in the Archives of this Capitol on the reverse of Page 68.

MENDOZA

Santa Fe. January 25th, 1742.

At the place of Our Lady of Belen, jurisdiction of the Town of Albuquerque, on the Ninth day of the month of December of the year, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty, I, Captain Nicolas Duran de Chavez, Senior Justice and War-Captain of said town and jurisdiction, by virtue of the decree of Lieutenant Colonel Don Gaspar de Mendoza, Governor and Captain General of this kingdom, promulgated on the 15th day of November last past, wherein I am directed

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pase y dé, R.l posesion al Cap.n Diego de Torres, en cavesa de todos los mensionados y firmados en el escrito q.e antecede, p.r el tenor de su pedim.to se les concede en nombre de su Mag.d cuyo auto fue intimado p.r mi orn. a los vecinos y circunvecinos de dhas. tarras. en las q.e no hallando ning.a contradic.n sobre lo q.e pide, pasé a dar la posesion, lindando dhas. tarras. p.r la pte. del Norte con las del Cap.n D.n Nicolas Duran y Chaves, p.r la del Sur, afrontado a las ruinas de la casa de Jhpe. Romero: Por el Poniente el Rio Puerco Por lo q.e mira a la otra banda del Rio del Norte, con el lind.o de los Pobladores de la Pura y limpia concepc.n y p.r el oriente con la sierra de Sandia, y p.r el Sur con paderes y ruinas de dha. casa del espresado Felipe Romero. Y haviendo reconocido dhos. linderos con tres testigos de asist.a e instrumentales seg.n dro. tomé de la mano al referido Torres, lo pasie p.r sus tarras. y dio voces arrancó Sacate, tiró piedras é hizo otras demostraciones en semejantes casos se requieren, persiviendo esta posesion en nombre de su Mag.d quieta y pacificam.te con los mismos lind.os q.e espresa su petic.n; en los cuales mandé se pusiesen perpetuas mohoneras, dandosele dhas. tarras. libres y generalm.te con pastos, aguas, abrevaderos, montes, usos y costumbres p.a q.e las goze p.r si, sus hijos, herederos y sucesores sin perjuicio ninguno: Y esta Real posesion, le sea de bastante titulo, y p.r ella las goze como dho. es; pues p.a q.e conste lo puse p.r dilig.a siendo testigos instrumentales Bernabe Baca y Baltasar Baca, y los de mi asist.a q.e lo firmaron con migo actuando como Jues receptor en el presente papel comun p.r no correr en estas partes el sellado, Ante mi, y como Jues receptor, Nicolas de chaves = De asist.a = J.n Mig.l Albares del castillo = De asist.a = Guillermo Sabedra

En la villa de Sta. Fee, capital de este Reyno de N. Mexico, a los veinte dias del mes de Julio de mil setec.tos cuarenta y dos, Yo el Jhe. coronel D. Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza, Gov.r y Cap.n Gen.l de este dho. Rey-

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to proceed to give royal possession to Captain Diego de Torres as the representative of al the persons to the tenor of their petition, a grant is made to them in the name of His Majesty, which decree was published to those adjoining said lands by my order, and there being no objection to the petition, I proceed to give possession; said lands being bounded on the north by those of Captain Nicolas Duran de Chavez, on the house fronting on the foundation of the house of Phelipe Romero; on the west, the Puerco River, that portion of the opposite of the river of the Purisima Concepcion, and on the east by the Sandia mountains, and the south by ruins of the foundation of the house of the said aforesaid, Phelipe Romero, and having examined said boundaries with three attending and instrumental witnesses, according to the law I took the aforesaid Torres by the hand and walked with him over the lands and he cried in a loud voice and pulled up grass and threw stones and gave other manifestations which are made and provided in such cases, receiving this possession in the name of His Majesty, quietly and peacefully with the same boundaries contained in his petition; whereupon, I directed perpetual landmarks to be established, giving him said lands free and with general pastures, waters, watering places, timber uses and customs, in order that he, his children, heirs and successors, may enjoy the same without opposition, and the royal possession to be evidence of the sufficient title, and by virtue of which he shall enjoy the same aforestates, and in order that it may so appear, I place it ont he record. Bernabe Baca, Baltazar Baca and those in attendance, being instrumental witnesses who signed with me, acting judge, on the present common paper, there being none in these parts.

Before me as acting Judge.

Nicolas de Chavez

Attending:
Jose Miguel Alvarez de Castillo
Guillermo Saavedra

In the Town of Santa Fe, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty-two, I Lieutenant Colonel Don Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza, Governor and Captain General of this said Kingdom,

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no p.r su Mag.d (Q. D. G.) Digo que hallandome informado q.e diferentes vecinos que se incluyen en la presente Merced que se les hizo p.r mi dho. Th.e coron.l en nombre del Rey N. S. y p.r cavesa de ella el Cap.n Diego Torres devia mandar y mande que todas las personas que no han ocupado dha. merced y puesto, ni fuesen à ocuparla en el termino de treinta dias q.e deveran contarse desde el dia de la fha. se les da p.r escluidos a la merced y trras. q.e pudieran tener dro. a ellas si las huviesen havitado: y que los pertenecientes de trras. a estos q.e se escluyan si no cumplen con lo ordenado se daran p.r realenges o se repartiran en las personas q.e las havitan deviendo cumplir con lo que citan las leyes reales sobre poblar y cultivar las trras: y asi lo proveis, mande y firme con los de mi asist.a en la forma acostumbrada, y en el presente papel p.r no haver otro de q.e doy fe. = D.n Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza = Testigos Salvador Martinez y Ant.o Tole.

El Sacado de una copia legalisada de la original que se halla en el archivo de Sta. Fee en un libro de Cedulas p.a los años de 1740 arriba a su fox.s sesenta y ocho v.ta

Sale 4 de 1834

Presented in Volume II of Claims Record "on Surveyor General's Office" pages 364, 365, 366 and 367

David J. Miller, Examiner

Vicente Dias de Luján

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by His Majesty, (Whom God may preserve) state, that having informed that several residents, including in this grant, which was made by me, said Lieutenant Colonel, in the name of the King, Our Sovereign, Captain Diego Torres being their representative, I should and did order that all such persons who have not occupied said grant and tract or who shall not occupy the same within thirty days to be counted from the date hereof, shall be considered as having forfeited their right to the grant and lands to which they have a right had they occupied the same and that the holders of land that are forfeited if they do not comply with what has been ordered, their lands shall be considered as vacant, or they shall be given to such persons as occupy them, in compliance with the royal decrees in reference to the settlement and cultivation of lands; and I have so provided, ordered and signed with those in my attendance, in the customary manner and on the present paper, there being none other that I can certify.

Don Gaspar Domingo de Mendoza

Witnesses:

Salvador Manuel Antonio Giole

The above is a true copy of the original on file in the Archives at Santa Fe, in a government book for the year 1740 and upwards on the reverse of page 68.

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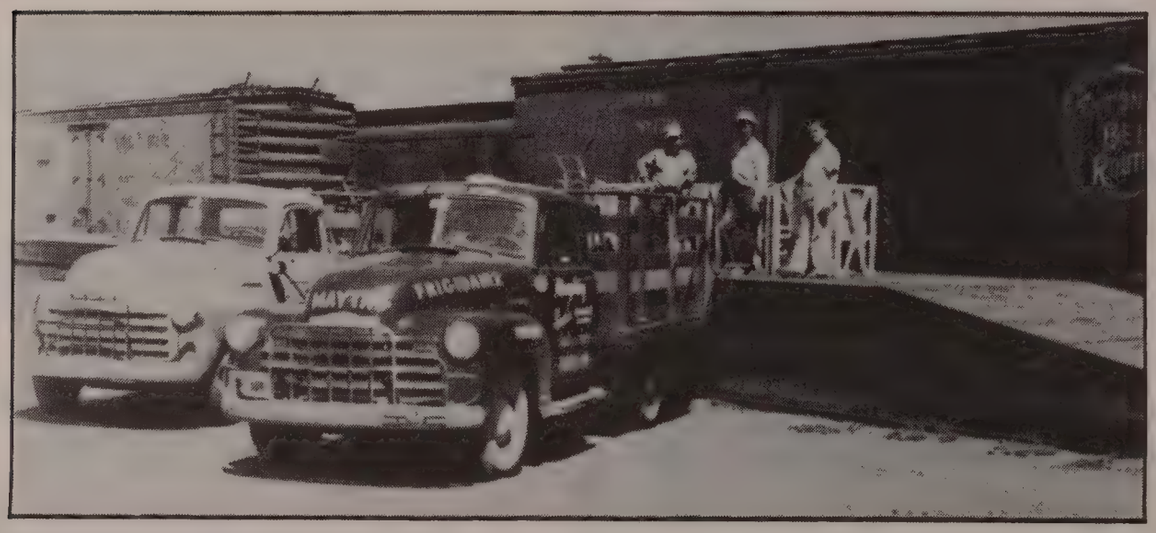

L to R: Perfeto Gabaldon, Rafael Sanchez, Pilar Sachs - 1953
at Belen Railroad unloading Maytag wringer washers

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CONGRATULATIONS BELEN

Feliz 250 Aniversario

Photo by Kristine Gueldenzoph Chavez

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CHAVEZ & CHAVEZ

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The Hey Day Club was an early predecessor to the Chamber of Commerce here in Belen. This is the annual Fourth of July picnic which was held at John Becker's ranch off the present day Gabaldon road. The wooden floor was for dancing. Photo courtesy of the Valencia County Historical Society.

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GREATER BELEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

221 SOUTH MAIN STREET / BOX 6 / BELEN, NEW MEXICO 87002 / 505-864-8091

6 July 1990

As we join together in celebrating this joyous occasion of the 250th Anniversary of Belen, let us reflect for a moment upon its humble origins as a settlement under the Spanish crown, it's latter day, more contemporary 20th century image as the Hub City of the southwestern region of the United States and, as we approach the threshold of the 21st century, the challenges and achievements which surely will portend and characterize the nature of our community in the foreseeable future.

From the small group of original settlers in 1740, our community has emerged over these two and a half centuries as a thriving, progressive town of 10,000-plus residents renowned for their industriousness and for their unenviable pride in the achievements of their community. We have experienced phenomenal growth in business, industry, education and every other aspect which signifies continuous, dynamic progress in the life and growth of a community.

The pace of growth and development have accelerated. We are fast becoming an area whose rapidly growing industrial sector is making it's impact felt upon the state, the southwest, the nation and, indeed, very shortly, will be felt throughout the world.

These accomplishments did not happen overnight nor were they gained single-handedly or by small groups of individuals. They happened because a broad spectrum of our community's residents over the years joined together in concerted, cooperative efforts to make possible the progress and growth of our community. For certain, we must never forget our indebtedness to those pioneering individuals and groups who stood in the vanguard of these efforts and who were the catalysts for instigating change, growth and development of our community. Without them our achievements would be paltry by comparison.

Let us resolve then, as citizens and residents of this community, to continue to band together in ever stronger bonds of friendship and cooperation to insure continuous, wholesome growth for our town and it's environs so that our youth of today and for the many generations of youth to come during the next 250 years in the life of Belen will have a legacy and promise of an even brighter future on the broad, challenging horizons which lie ahead.

Viva Belen

Cortez Kibble

Cortez Kibble
President

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

To the Citizens of Belen:

Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument wishes Belen a happy 250th Anniversary Celebration of its founding and hopes it will continue to grow and prosper as the "hub" of New Mexico. As a National Monument located forty miles southeast in Mountainair, Salinas Pueblo Missions welcomes visitors from Belen every day of the year to enjoy learning about the people who first came to our area. The Tiwas, the Tompiros and other Native Americans, the Franciscan friars and the Spanish soldier-colonists all left their mark on the land, the culture, the mores, and the environment. The pueblo mounds, partially excavated, reveal a lifestyle far different from today but still related to that of Pueblos living along the Rio Grande Valley. The existing mission walls create a feeling of the bustling of a community striving to become self-sufficient and a friar who is far from fellow Franciscans for support. The Spanish settlers, whose estancias eventually blended into the landscape through the centuries, attempted to make a living in a place so different from their homeland and eventually joined all the others in leaving the area in the 1670s because of drought, famine, pestilence and repeated Indian raids.

Rudy L. Baca
Rudy L. Baca
Superintendent

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Belen's 250th Anniversary

Dear Belenites and Friends:

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the 250th Anniversary of our great city "Belen".

We hope you enjoy all the events and festivities as much as we have in planning them.

For all your support and contributions which you have given to this memorable event...MUCHISIMAS GRACIAS!

Sincerely,

The Belen 250th Steering Committee
Diana DeBaca-Luna, Editor
Robert Chavez, Assistant to the Editor

****

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Diana DeBaca-Luna was born on April 17, 1957 in Belen, New Mexico, and resides in Adelino, New Mexico with her husband Arnold, and daughter Bridgette. She is a 1975 graduate of Belen High School, and is presently employed with the Law Firm of Chavez and Chavez as a Paralegal. She also is the Dance and Activities Co-ordinator for the Valencia County Cultural Program and a member of the Valencia County Association for Retarded Citizens.

Photo by Kristine Gueldenzoph Chavez

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